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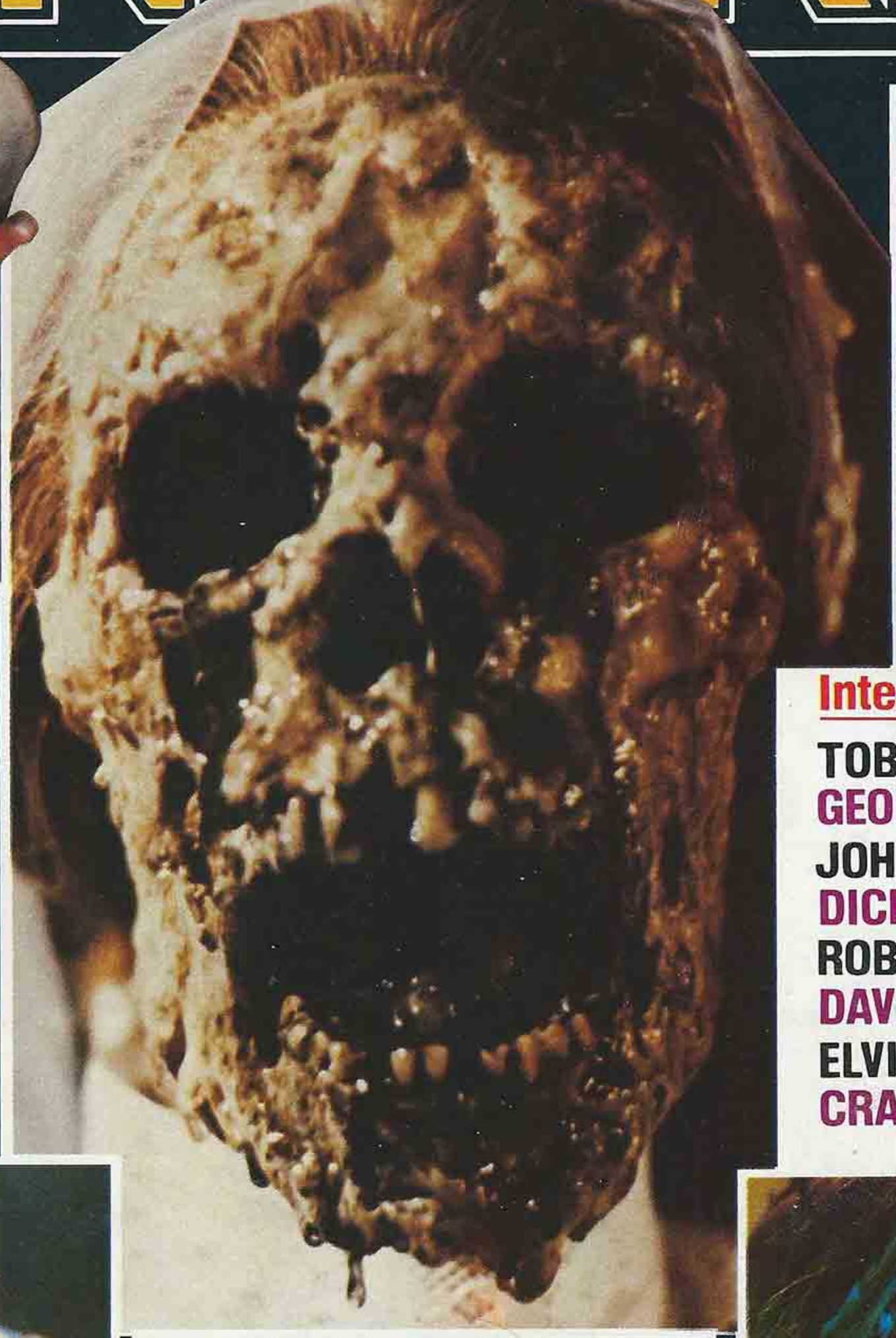

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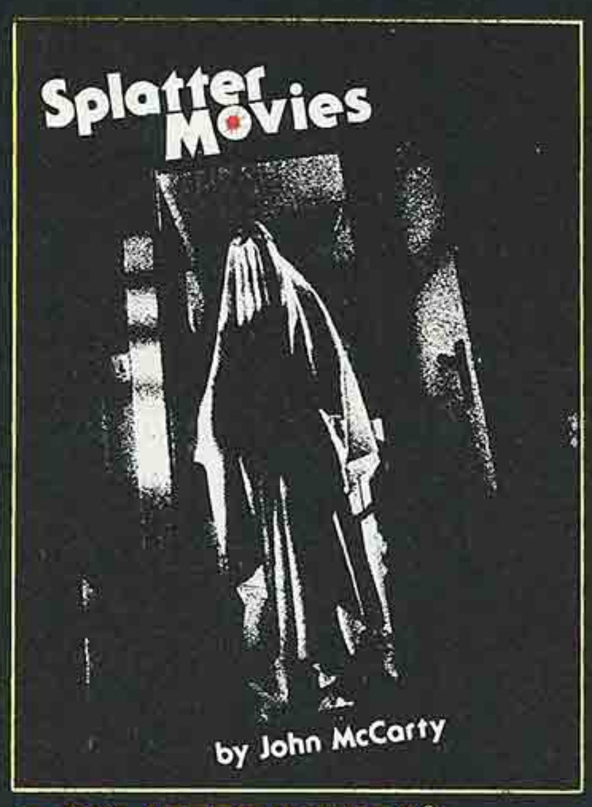

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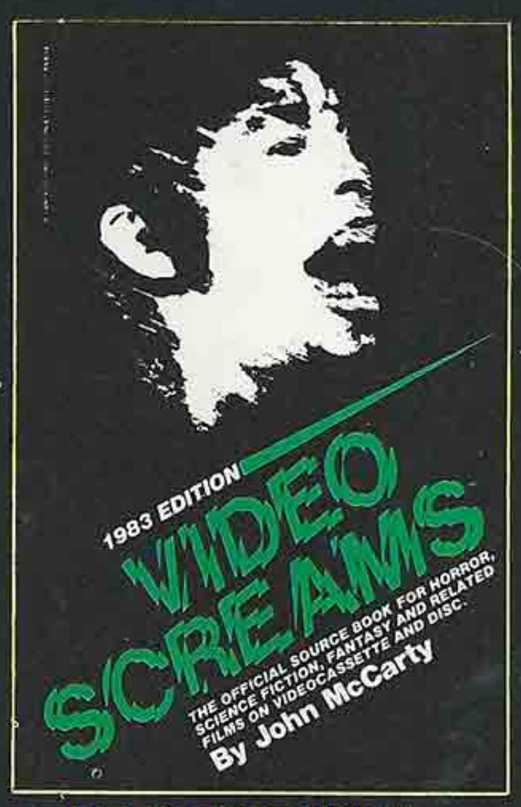

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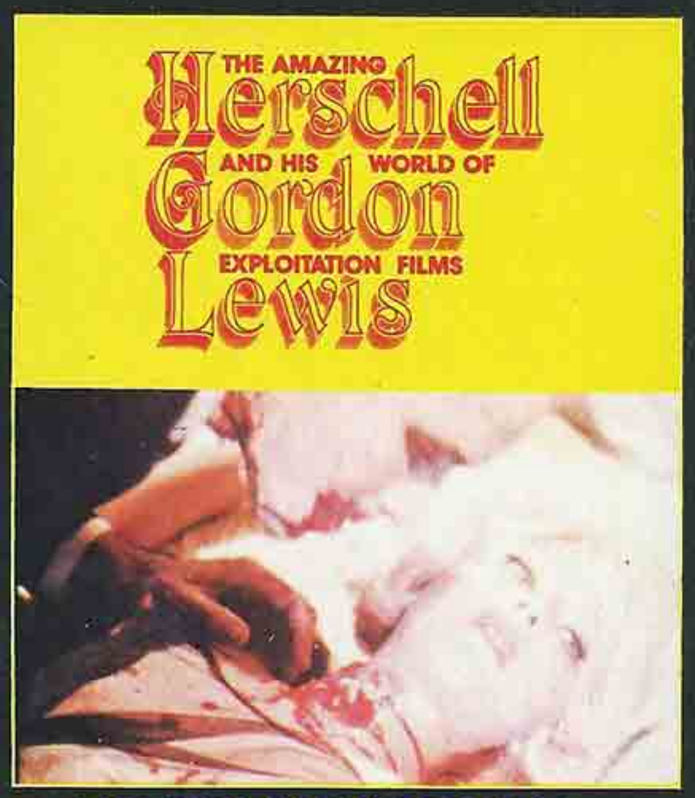

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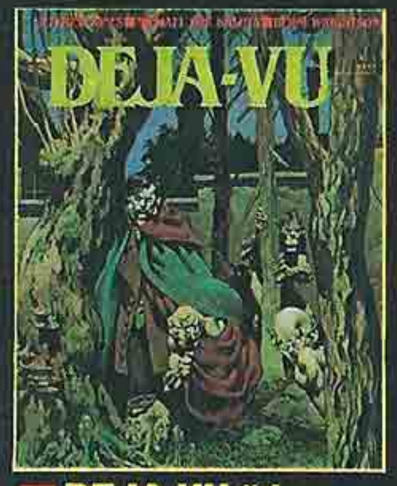

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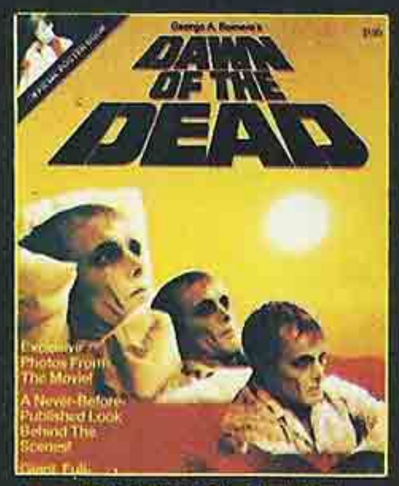

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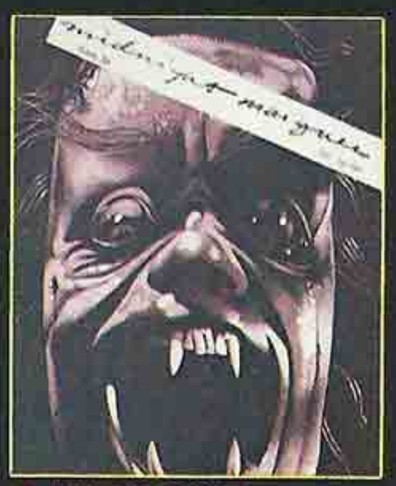

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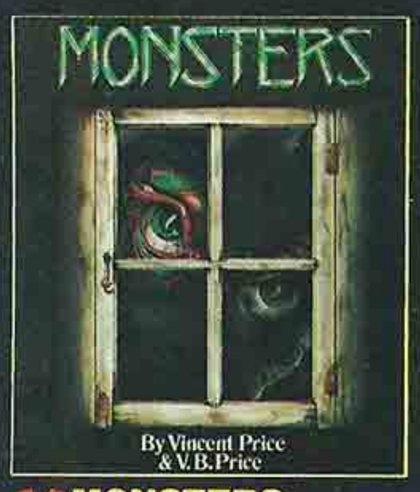

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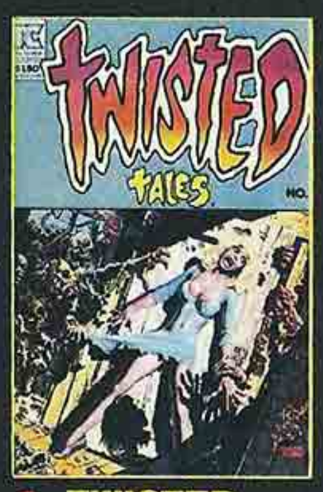

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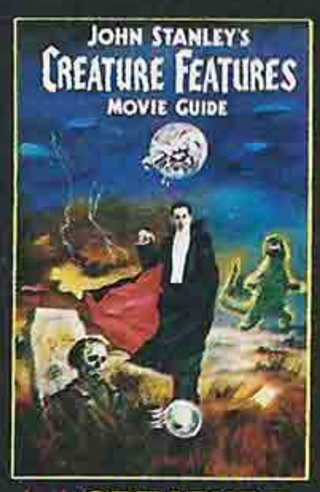

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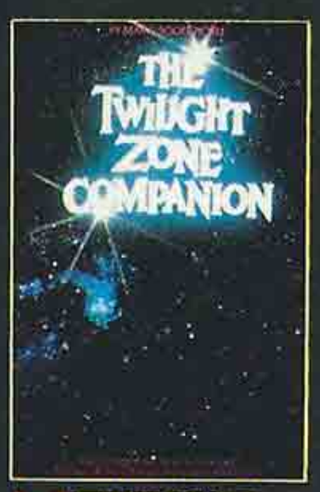

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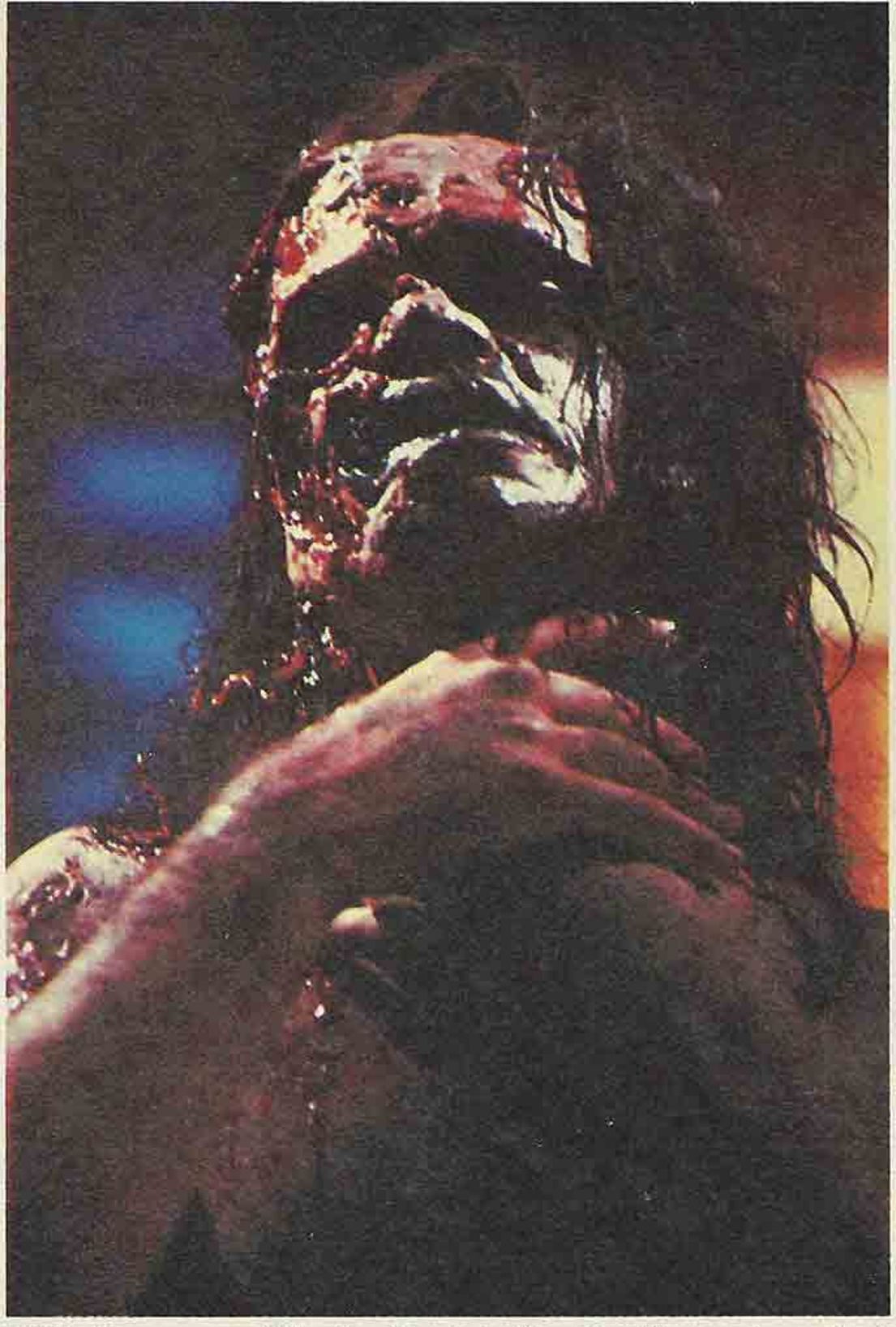
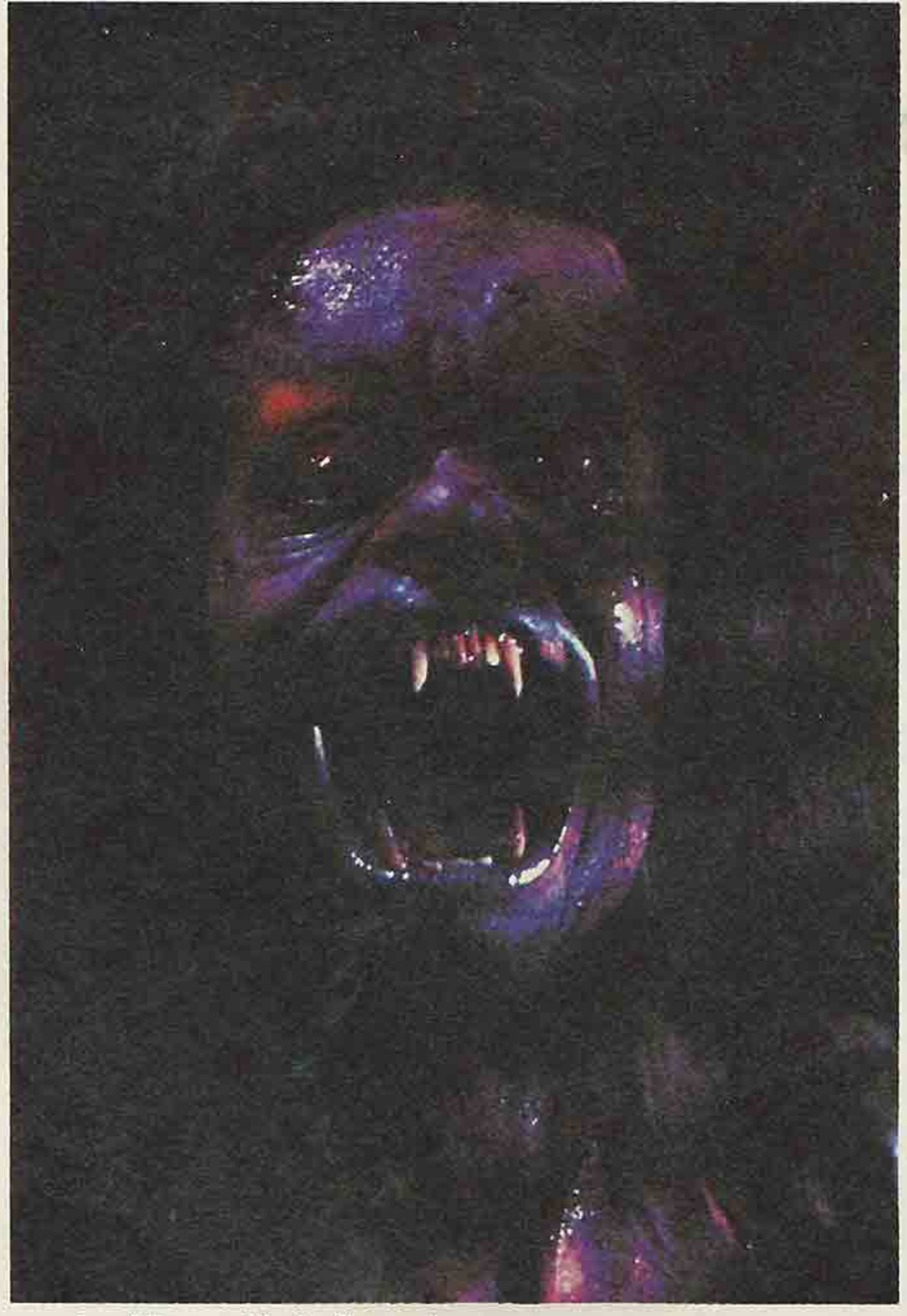
One of Jason's three dimensional victims in *Friday the 13th Part 3 in 3D*.





Eddie the werewolf in Joe Dante's *The Howling*; yet another example of Fango kind of people.

What Makes the Bloody Best?

You hold in your hands the very best that FANGORIA has to offer, a selection culled from all of the issues published in the last year. Compiling such a titanic volume of horror and mayhem has been a grueling challenge that has been the supreme test of my editorial acumen. A publication such as ours has enormously exacting, if peculiar standards that have no rival in the publishing world today. You're probably wondering, "How do they do it? How do they select a chosen few from the stacks of unbelievably great articles published in Fango?"

To answer these questions, I am providing here an outline of the procedure that I must put each article through before I can bestow upon it the ultimate seal of approval as one of Fango's Bloody Best. As you will see, this procedure is a demanding obstacle course that only a few stories can survive.

1) Read the article.
2) Present it to the publishers, Norman Jacobs and Kerry O'Quinn, for their approval.
3) Run it by a panel of civic-minded moms to see if it makes them shake their fists and turn blue with rage.
4) Pore over the article once more to make sure it makes no reference to hobbits, elves, the majesty of space, or Rainer Fassbinder.
5) Submit it to the Fango Board of Directors (Uncle Bob) and see if it distracts him from his home computer.
6) Submit it to *Cinefantastique* to see if it receives a rejection slip.
7) Check to see if the color photos will make the mailroom clerk laugh coarsely.
8) Re-route it through the Supervisory Editorial Board (me) and wait for final approval.
9) Ask myself: Can this be edited and laid-out before lunch?

And so, here, chosen with the utmost care and attention, and with a Dick Miller interview, is the undeniably BLOODY BEST OF FANGORIA.

David Everitt
Editor

On (and off) The Set of

CREEPSHOW™

Tom Savini at work; Stephen King at home.

By Bob Martin

Savini prepares Barbeau for death in a fantasy sequence in "The Crate."

Fluffy's manicure. Through most of the shooting of "The Crate," FX assistant Ferrucci spent time inside a wooden box.

My very first stop on arriving on the *Creepshow* set had been the shop set up by Tom Savini in an L-shaped office just past the entrance to the soundstage. Long ago, Savini had told us how pleased he was for the opportunity to advance from splatters to critters with this film; now that he was in the midst of it all, he was absolutely ecstatic.

The room was dominated by a large chart that listed each of the *Creepshow* stories, the elements Savini was responsible for, and their due dates. Though principal filming was nearly complete, Savini and crew would face one of their busiest periods once E.G. Marshall—the star of the last segment—left the set. At that point, Savini would start working on three different segments at once, additional effects needed for "They're Creeping Up On You," "The Lonesome Death of Jordy Verrill," "The Crate," and for the set-piece that opens and closes the film—including Savini's own brief role in the film.

"You missed me in the midst of my terrible depression last week," Savini said. "Things had all been going so smoothly and so well, and then we had two things in a row that didn't work out properly. Both were effects we were doing on Stephen King for the "Jordy" segment—one where we were growing green things on his hands, and then where we (CENSORED TO PRESERVE SURPRISE). But now we've made the time to do that all over, and this time do it right."

The effects man displayed both the enthusiasm of a kid and the pride of a craftsman as he took me on a tour of the shop to meet the many creatures, artifacts and corpses required for the film. "Have you met Fluffy?" he asked, while snapping at me with a long row of razor-sharp incisors. The creature he was holding looked like the offspring of an illicit match between a tasmanian devil and a chimpanzee—only different. Despite its large, cold eyes, and its rather toothy malevolent smile (composed of gorilla fangs), it seemed somehow adorable. This was Savini's realization of King's creature in "The Crate." In the back of the shop, effects production assistant Jessie Nathan was attaching hair, one strand at a time, to another Fluffy head. "They still haven't shot a scene where Fluffy is thrown into a body of water," Savini explained. "I don't want my mechanized head going underwater, so Jessie's working on a second head for that purpose."

Hanging on one wall was the head and chest of Nathan Grantham, returned from seven years in the grave in the "Father's Day" segment. Though Nate is portrayed in life by Jon Lormer, the role of "Dead Nate" required a small actor, one who could wear a lot of rot and still appear the same size as Lormer; Romero's choice for the role was diminuitive John Amplas, best remembered as the title character in *Martin*. "Lormer's a very familiar character actor; one whose face you know immediately, but when I started on Nate, I had no idea what Lormer looked like. After seven years in the grave, I didn't have to capture his face, but I did want to know what size he was, and everybody said, 'Lormer? Oh, he's a big guy! Then he arrived on set, and he's thin! He's the Spectre! But the way it was shot, it works quite well, anyway."

"The Spectre" that Savini mentions is a skeletal figure who appears in the opening of the film—rather like a cinematic equivalent of E.C. comics' host-creatures The Cryptkeeper, The Vaultkeeper and The Old Witch. Savini assistant Daryl Ferrucci was fine-tuning the skeleton-figure's cable mechanisms as we spoke, a task that Savini inter-

rupted in order to introduce me to the chap.

"Hi, Bob," said Savini in a Mickey-Mouse voice as he operated the jaw cable. The man is a terrible ventriloquist, but the Spectre is nevertheless an impressive piece of work. "Daryl built all the internal mechanisms; I just told him that I wanted it to smile, to roll its eyes, do this or that. A little more work on it, and we'll have it singing and dancing," he jokes. "Daryl's been with me on the last three pictures—first *The Burning,* and then I took him with me to *The Prowler* (recently retitled *Rosemary's Killer).* And now *Creepshow* . . . of course, those earlier pictures each took four, five weeks, and we've been working on *Creepshow* for eight months! The pressures, all the last minute things have been unbelievable; I don't know how I'll feel when it's all over, but I guarantee you it won't be sad."

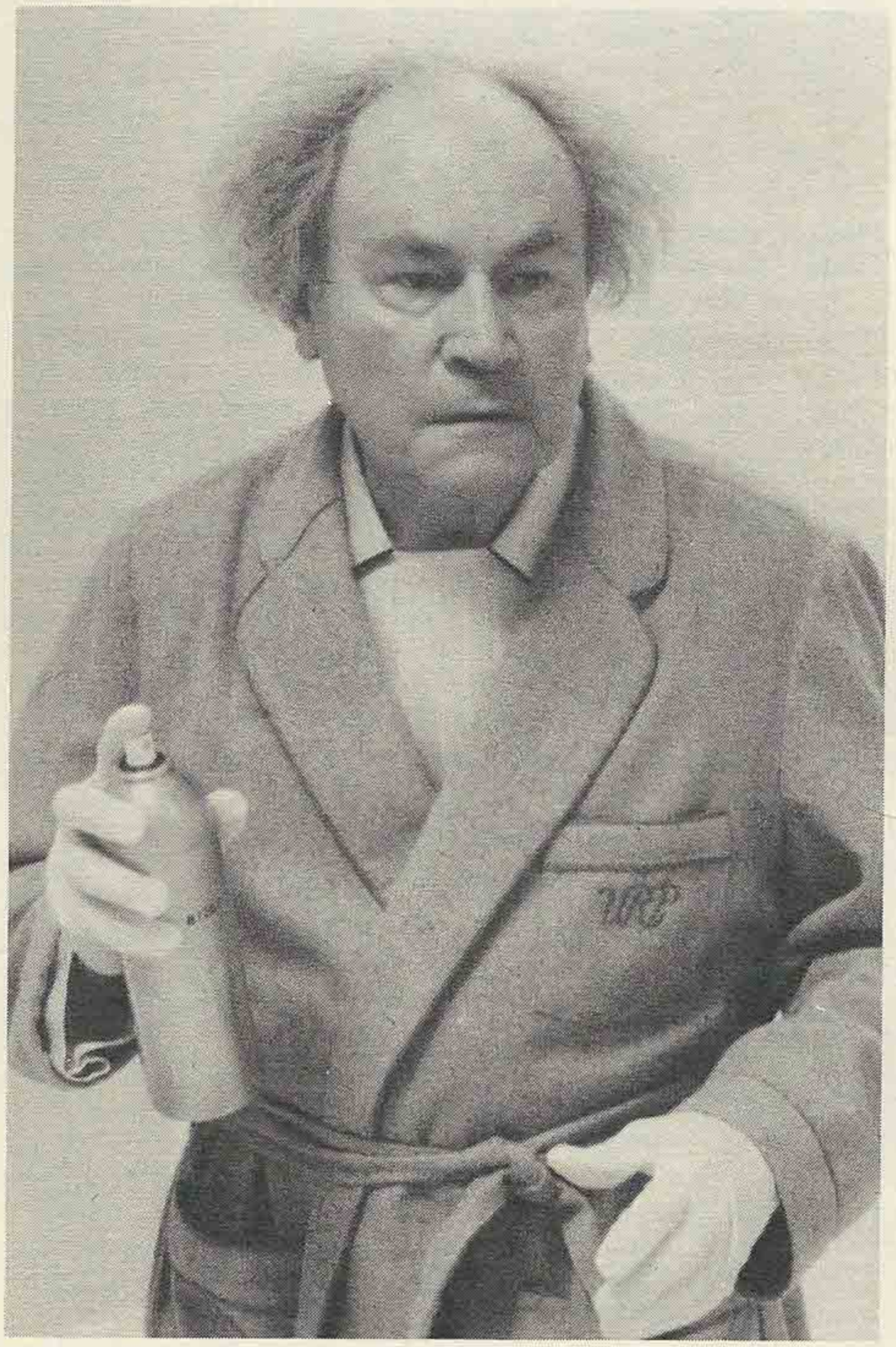
Needless to say, this was a busy time for Savini, so he resumed work on his principal artifact for "They're Creeping Up On You," a device to facilitate the demise of E.G. Marshall, which appears on our cover. In testing this device, Savini had to confront one of his own fears.

First, let's make one thing clear—Tom Savini is no pantywaist; in fact, nothing about *Knightriders* pleased him more than the opportunity to stage the elaborate hotel-room fight scene. Nevertheless, he does have a reasonable abhorrence for certain things; for instance, in one interview he admitted to me that he never directly handled the animal viscera required for so many of his films. "I'd never admit to the people I was working with that I felt that way," Savini had told me. "Instead, I would arrive on the set and find this cardboard box of chilled guts waiting for me, and I'd casually turn to a production assistant and say, 'Would you mind taking that box over to the set? I've got to carry all this other stuff . . .' "

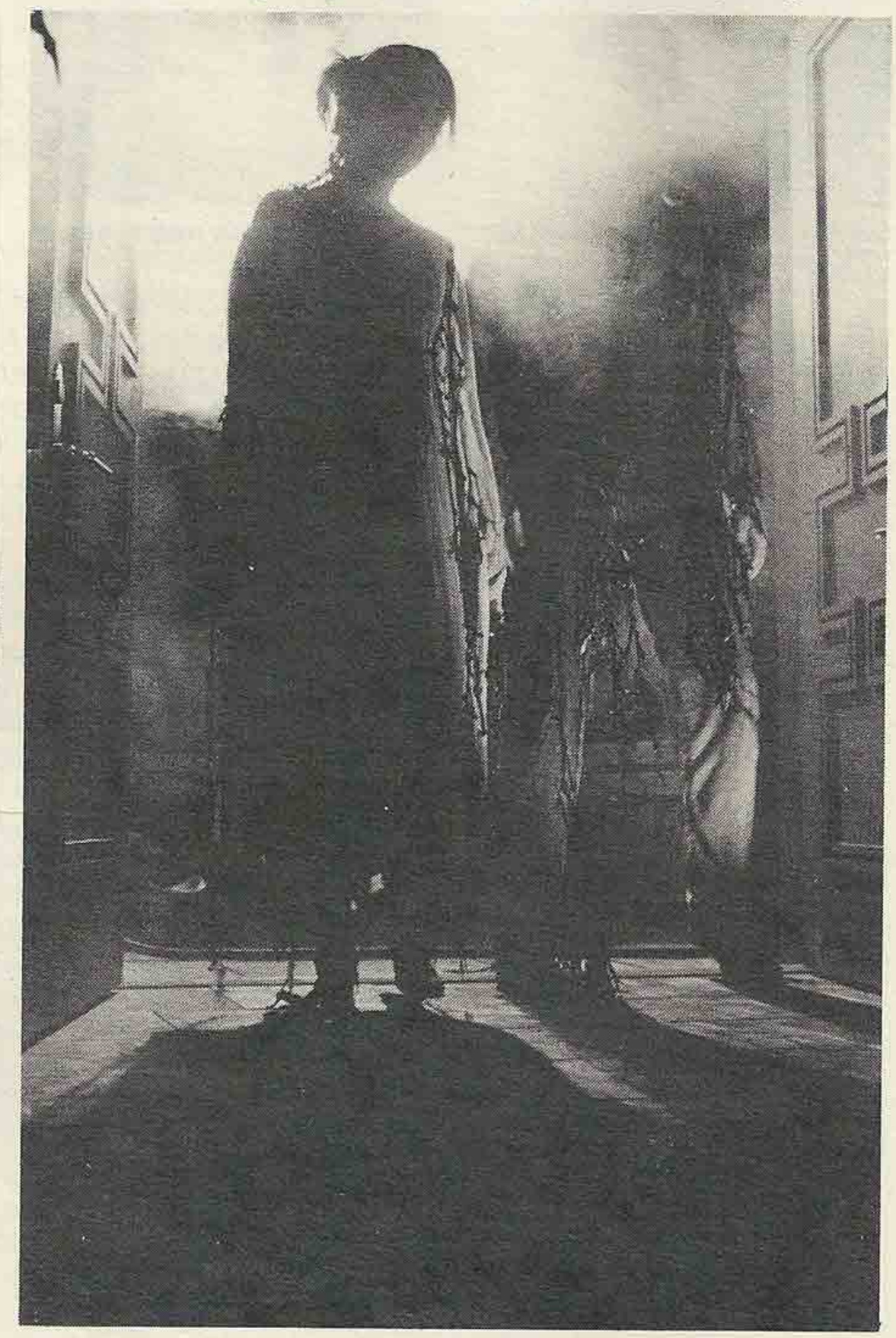
Which brings us to Savini's other phobia, an extreme distaste for cockroaches. "I can't be near them," Savini admits. But, referring to the artifact that he was currently working on, "there's a syringe in here, with a trap door that controls the flow of roaches. I was setting up a test with Ray Mendez—I let him put the roaches in—and one came out onto my hand. I jumped back, threw it against the wall, and had a moment's panic. Earlier, before we got here, I was running some tests of my own where I had to work with them, and had them crawling on me. If I don't have a choice, I can do it, but I'd really rather not."

Though Savini decapitated Betsy Palmer some time ago, *Creepshow* is his first opportunity to do damage to a wide range of well-known actors. "I've done casts of Stephen King, of E.G. Marshall, of Carrie Nye, and special makeups of one sort or another on most of the cast. Hal Holbrook became a good buddy; he wrote a letter to Dick Smith (a friend from Holbrook's days as Mark Twain) about our stuff. Then Dick Smith called and said he'd like to visit—we picked him up at the airport in the morning, and he left that night. We showed him around, and he showed us photos of his stuff in *Ghost Story* and *Death Bite;* great stuff! Later, I heard from Carl Fullerton that Dick had said some very nice things about what he'd seen here. That was very encouraging; Dick is like everybody's teacher, and if he likes your work, it's like getting a good grade—very gratifying."

Savini's own pleasure in the way *Creepshow* is turning out includes a good deal of pride for his young assis-



FANGORIA cover model E.G. Marshall in "They're Creeping Up On You."



Gaylen Ross and Ted Danson return from a dip in the ocean Romero-style in "Something To Tide You Over."

tant, Daryl Ferrucci, a New York lad. "Before I went out to do *The Burning,* I called my best friend Taso (you've seen him in *Knightriders);* my contract entitled me to an assistant, and I figured I'd hire him. Then the people with the film called and said they'd hired somebody to work with me, the son of one of the gaffers on the picture. I thought, 'Oh, great. They've got somebody who can't do anything else, so they're going to pawn him off on me.' It turned out to be Daryl; and he turned out to be brilliant, so I've had him with me on every job since."

After continuing to chat in a less formal manner for awhile, we allowed Savini to return his full concentration to his work, and wandered onto the set to watch the shot described in issue #18. A lot of our time on the set was spent in informal chatter; in fact, the only chance we had on the set to engage Stephen King in a formal interview, we muffed it—later we discovered that we had inserted our tape cassette in the recorder backwards. (This is why they tell you in journalism school to take notes at all times. Of course, most people can tell from the way I write that I never went to journalism school.)

King, however, being a True Sport, later gave me a second opportunity quite a while later, shortly after he'd seen the roughly finished cut of *Creepshow*. "Well, Bob Martin," King said, when we at last settled down to talk. "What can I possibly tell you about *Creepshow?*"

In fact, I still had a number of unanswered questions about the film, and about its place in King's own career, starting with the summer's day in 1978 when the project first came to be. "George and Richard Rubinstein had bought the rights to *The Stand* by that time," King recalls, "and we were talking about how we were going to handle it. But everybody was kinda *gloomy* about it. We knew it was going to be a long-term project, with lots of preparation time; and that it would take a lot of bucks, and it would be hard to get the financing and still retain control. I said, what if we develop an original project, something that we could do for a really low budget—I was thinking of a budget the size of *Night of the Living Dead*—have it be a big success, so that we would have the credibility we needed to go on with *The Stand.*" *Creepshow*'s budget turned out to be some 20 times the amount spend on the production of *Night of the Living Dead,* but it's still a fraction of what would be needed to adapt King's post-Armagedden epic.

Ripple-drinking wrestling fan Jordy Verrill notices that Something's Wrong.

But on that fateful morning, Romero, Rubinstein and King were discussing what kind of picture they might do; to King's recollection, "I said, 'What if we did a whole bunch of things of varying lengths—some would be almost like comedy blackouts, only scary, little set-pieces, and some longer ones.' George's eyes sort of lit up, and he said, 'What if we did 'em in different styles? One could be in black and white, just a little frame in the center of the screen, and for another one we could really open it up, use Cinerama 70 or something.' That's when we were talking about 3-D."

Upon arriving at the E.C. comic book concept, the format-mixing idea faded out, though both King and Romero entertain the prospect of working in three dimensions sometime in the future (on a joint project, we can only hope).

King's constant presence on the set is not typical of screenwriters—usually the screenplay is dropped off and the writer hopes that, two years later, he will see a finished product that vaguely resembles his work. "I didn't really take that active a part in the ongoing

As Romero and King smile for the camera, muse on this: why is George Romero wearing one golfing glove?

process of fimling," King says. "Of course, my presence as an actor was necessary for a time, but mostly I was observing, because I would like to direct myself someday. And then, because I was there much of the time, I found myself working with George on certain parts of the script when changes had to be made, usually due to physical circumstances."

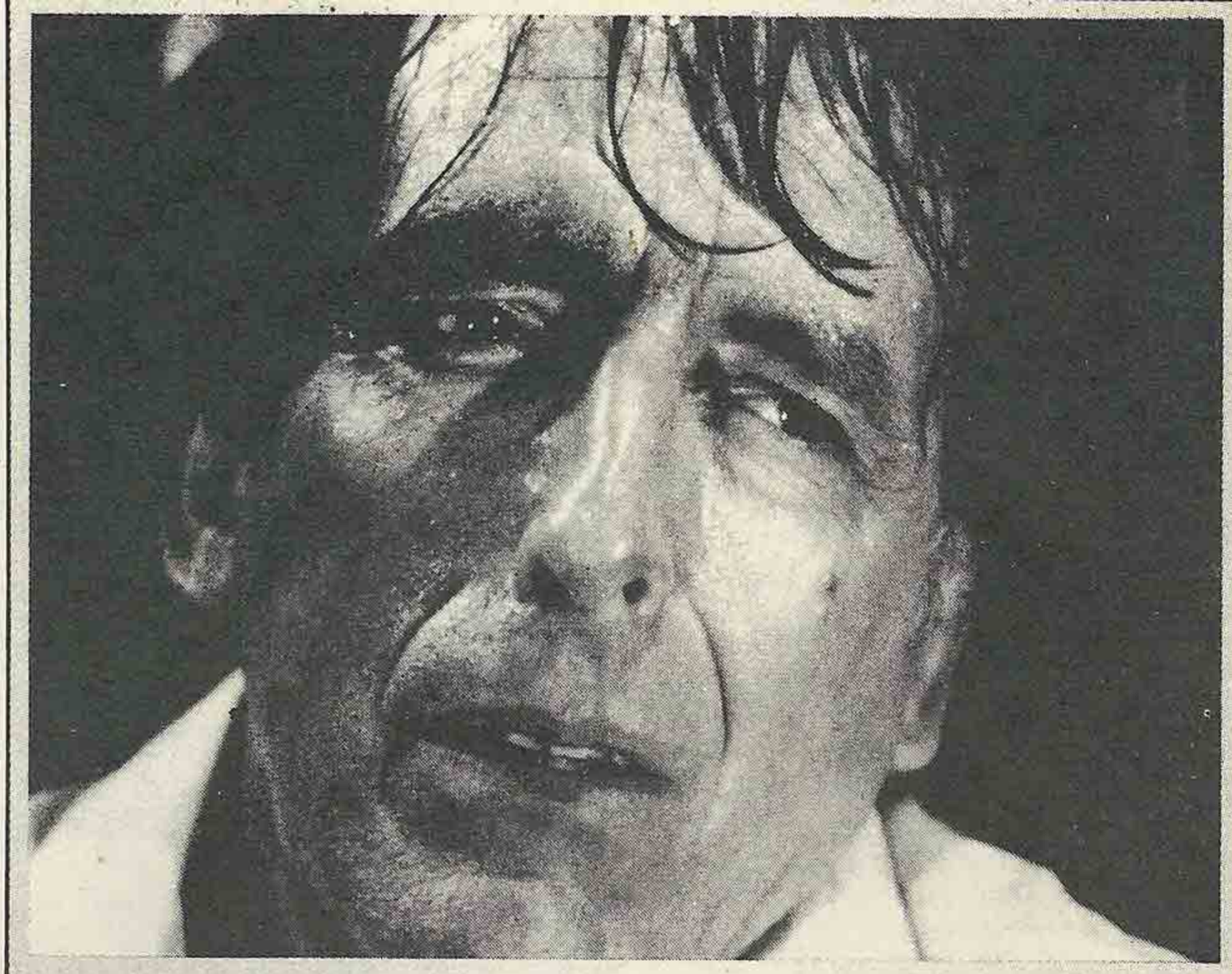
E.C. comics were invariably morality tales; stories in which the wicked, the greedy, the conspiratorial are brought to an unmerciful end, usually through the intervention of an anonymous supernatural force—fate. King's stories for *Creepshow* faithfully follow that pattern; but how does one do that in the 1980's without becoming corny? "One thing you can't do is come down on that as a conscious part of every episode. It's simply there. It's waiting for people to pick it up, and you hope, when they do, that it still works. But the movie doesn't at all depend on people picking up the E.C. elements, though I hope they do. I'm kind of expecting they will, because whenever I mention them, everybody nods, and seems to have very fond memories of what those comics were like."

With the work of *Creepshow* behind him, and nothing ahead but the glory, King's caréer as a screenwriter continues apace. While Dino de Laurentiis will not be using King's screenplay in his forthcoming adaptation of *The Dead Zone*, King considers the parting a very friendly one. "He's a fantastic man, but we began to drift away from each other in terms of the concept. I believe he wants to go more for simplicity, and at one point I told him he should find a writer who would give him something that he could be comfortable with. Dino said, 'Stephen, you must give me the name of a writer who you respect,' so I of course said 'Bob Martin, of course.' No—actually, I suggested Dennis Etchison."

There's no announced start date on *Dead Zone*, but word has it that Carpenter's adaptation of King's *Firestarter* is likely to be in preparation at Universal (not Embassy, as I have previously, stupidly stated) as you read this. That one is to be adapted by Bill Lancaster, screenwriter of *The Thing*. "Everybody tells me that he did a very nice piece of adapting on John Campbell's 'Who Goes There?' " says King, "so I have no problem with that at all—but I've never read any of his wórk myself."

Still, there's one more film adaptation that King purists can look forward to with relish. "I don't know how firm their plans may be, but I have heard that Taft International will be starting on *Cujo* around June 3rd; they've begun set construction, and I understand they're working very hard with two St. Bernards."

What can we say but woof woof!



Fritz Weaver and *CREEPSHOW*

"I love this kind of movie," says the distinguished actor Fritz Weavor of *Creepshow*, "for the same reason I enjoyed working on the old *Twilight Zone* episodes and *Mssion Impossibles*. They are so much more imaginatively done than the realistic cup-of-coffee movies that you see today. Those films bore me to tears."

Weaver, who plays a college professor who discovers a fairly large critter in "The Crate," took the assignment because, quite frankly, he wanted to work with director George Romero.

"I'm a long-time fan," he admits. "He films his stories the way a novelist writes them. He has whole thought sequences that he allows characters to go through before doing a scene. He's like Balzac in terms of his thought patterns. I jumped at the chance to work with him."

Once signed, the veteran actor found himself on a studio set in the midst of Pennsylvania . . . a long way from Hollywood. "That in itself is a plus," Weaver beams. "Romero's studio has retained all the magic and excitement that the Hollywood studios have lost. He knows that. Hollywood knows that and, so, in retaliation, some people refer to his work as 'amateurish.' I totally disagree.

"His critics have tried to brand him with the word 'amateur.' What they really sense, what they really fear, is his enthusiasm. He's still in love with his work. He's still a kid in that respect. His entire crew is like that. Over lunch, we'd sit around and toss ideas back and forth. It was like high school!

"I was thrilled to be able to actually work with a monster. In a lot of monster movies you never see the monster. You see an eye or a hand or the quick flailing of a tail. In this segment, when I open the crate, I see the whole monster. It's head practically fills the crate.

"Tom Savini designed the monster suit. It was horribly realistic. He's a real master. Like George and Stephen King, he is totally enthusiastic about his work. He stayed up all night working on those masks because he was having so much fun. I once asked him if he had ever been an actor because he has a very lithe way of moving. He told me that he had been a dancer. He moves like a dancer. His work reflects that grace, too. He has a sense of the way surreal creatures should move. He designed my monster and practiced moving in it himself, just to find out what the creature could and couldn't do. By the time we were ready for filming, he knew every strength and flaw of that suit. He spent a lot of time coaching the actor playing the monster. There was no way for anything to go wrong."

Weaver realizes that he sounds like a Romero cheerleader when describing *Creepshow* but stresses, "I can't help it. It was one of the most pleasurable working experiences in my entire life. The crew couldn't do enough foruyou and you couldn't do enough for them. At times, things went so well that we'd all find ourselves laughing on the set, asking each other 'Wonder what the adults are doing to make a living?' "

—Ed Naha

Rob Bottin and THE THING

The Incredible Dr. Bottin emerges from his lab with a Thing *of Nightmare . . .*

ALL PHOTOS: © 1982 UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS; xtra thnx to MR. C.

By Ellen Carlomagno

The multi-form monster that is the title character of John Carpenter's most recent thriller is no doubt making personal appearances in thousands of unpleasant dreams these days; and little wonder, since many aspects of its charming personality originated in the dreams of young Rob Bottin. "It's true," says the hirsute effects man, as he tosses back another iced tea. "I was under so much pressure to come up with something that nobody could imagine, that I started having dreams about myself sitting at my work table with all my tools in front of me, trying to come up with ideas. In the dream I would finally build something, or sculpt something, and it would look really good, so I'd wake up, write it down, and take it to John the next morning." Bottin is resting easier now that his dreams, realized on screen by Carpenter, are loose in the world to disturb the sleep of millions of moviegoers.

Bottin's involvement in *The Thing* stems from his earlier work with Carpenter on *The Fog* (see FANGORIA #6 and #11), which featured his effects work and acting as the leader of a ghostly crew of lepers. Even then, says Bottin, "I knew John was planning to do a large-scale monster movie, but it wasn't for about two years that I found out for sure that it was *The Thing*." When Bottin was brought onto the film in mid-1981, preproduction had already started, but no firm decision had been made on the appearance—or appearances—of *The Thing*. Some ground had already been broken by designer Dale Kuipers, however. "Dale had some absolutely beautiful paintings of what he thought it should look like," says Bottin; after discussing some of his own concepts with Carpenter, Bottin found that "John wasn't too enthusiastic about what I had in mind for the Thing, at first. He said it was too weird . . . I just told him, 'whatever you have in mind, John,' and I asked Dale if he would work with me on it." Personal matters, however, required Kuipers' return to his home in Wisconsin, leaving Bottin to run with the ball.

When Bottin first attacked the problem, he had nothing on paper, but, fresh from his transformative experiences on *The Howling*, he had a skull-ful of ideas. "John asked me to draw it," he recalls, "but I told him it would take too long, so he suggested I work with one of the storyboard artists, Mike Ploog (see FANGORIA #18)." Rob was excited by that prospect, as he had been quite a fan of Ploog's comic book art. "When I described my ideas to him," recounts Bottin, "He dropped his coffee cup. But what he came up with was great. We must have gone through a thousand drawings—all good stuff. There was enough for six more movies." When Ploog would finish storyboarding a sequence of Bottin's effects, the makeup man would take it to Carpenter for approval. "If he laughed," says Bottin, "that meant he liked them."

Bottin's design of the Thing is actually several designs, as the creature is ever-changing, taking on new shapes—and sometimes neglecting to get rid of parts of its old one. "I didn't want it to remind anyone of any monster they had ever seen," says Bottin. "I wanted to avoid, if possible, all the clichés."

The Thing had the biggest budget

Although publicity shots of the various incarnations of the Thing were forbidden in an extreme effort to preserve pre-release secrecy, John Carpenter and Universal have kindly obliged us with this series of film-frames depicting the excruciating demise of Norris (Charles Hallahan), in what is definitely the film's most spectacular and unsettling effects scene.

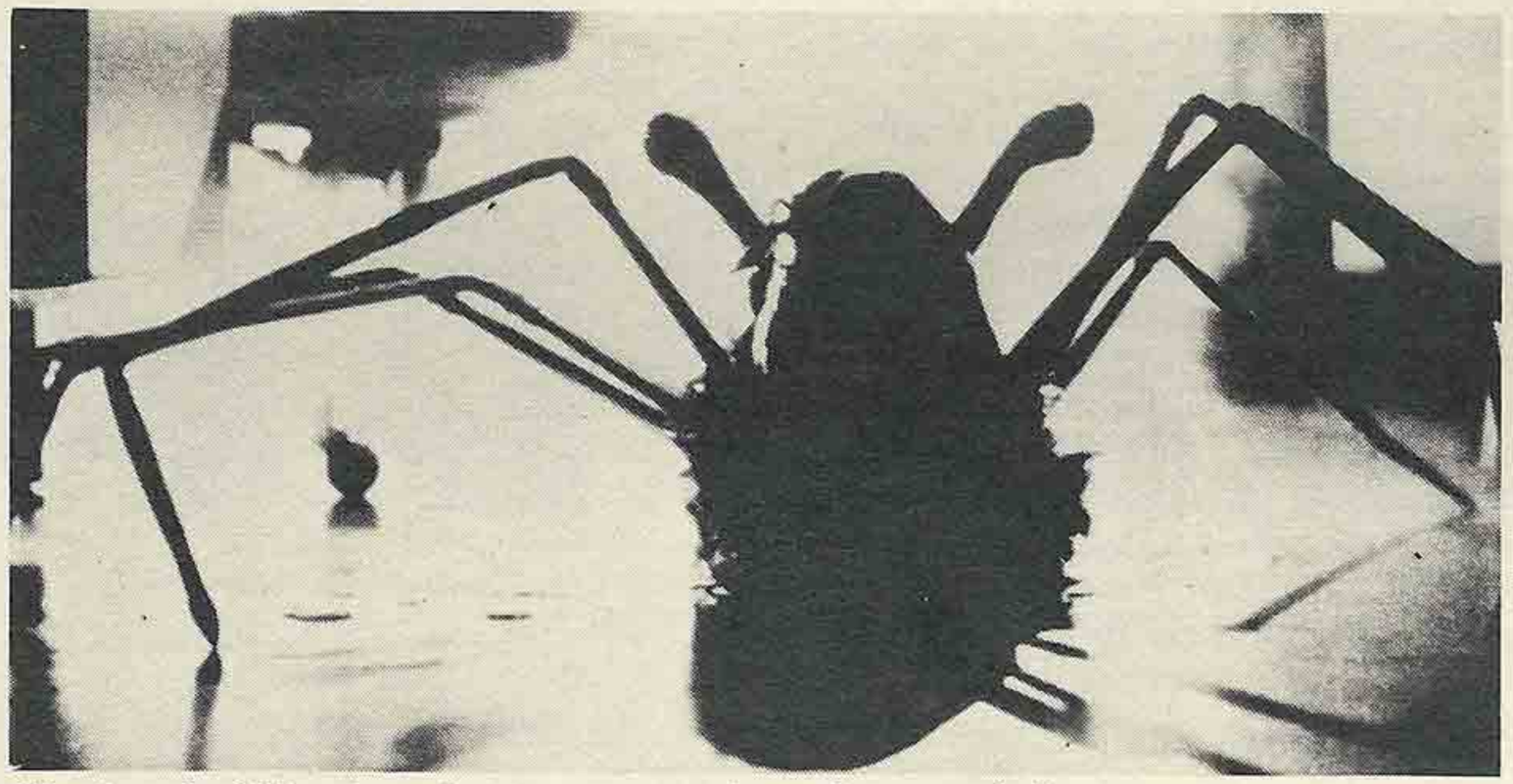
Bottin has ever had for a film. "It was a dream come true," he says. "We could do anything; just think things up and make them." It also had the largest crew Bottin had ever worked with, amounting to some 35 artists and technicians at its largest. "I found it difficult to work with so many people," says Bottin, "all with different needs and wants. I learned an awful lot from that situation." Bottin considers his wisest decision the hiring of FX line producer Erik Jensen. "Erik worked with me on *The Howling*, so he knew what to expect from me." Bottin calls Jensen "the most level-headed person I ever met in the special makeup effects business. Effects people can get pretty eccentric—myself included—but Erik has no eccentricities whatsoever. He's just the kind of person I need to keep a lid on things, and to keep everything running smoothly." Jensen, himself an effects artist, supervised the entire special makeup effects unit production on *The Thing*, making sure matters didn't get out of hand money- or time-wise.

Rob feels that he had the best crew he could ever have assembled. "I hardly did anything in this picture," says Bottin. "I mainly just supervised. I'd tell everyone what I wanted, and let them go to it; though, I also made suggestions and changed my mind a lot, which made a lot of people crazy. Next time I do something like this, I will have more drawings and more clear-cut directions, so it will be easier for everyone."

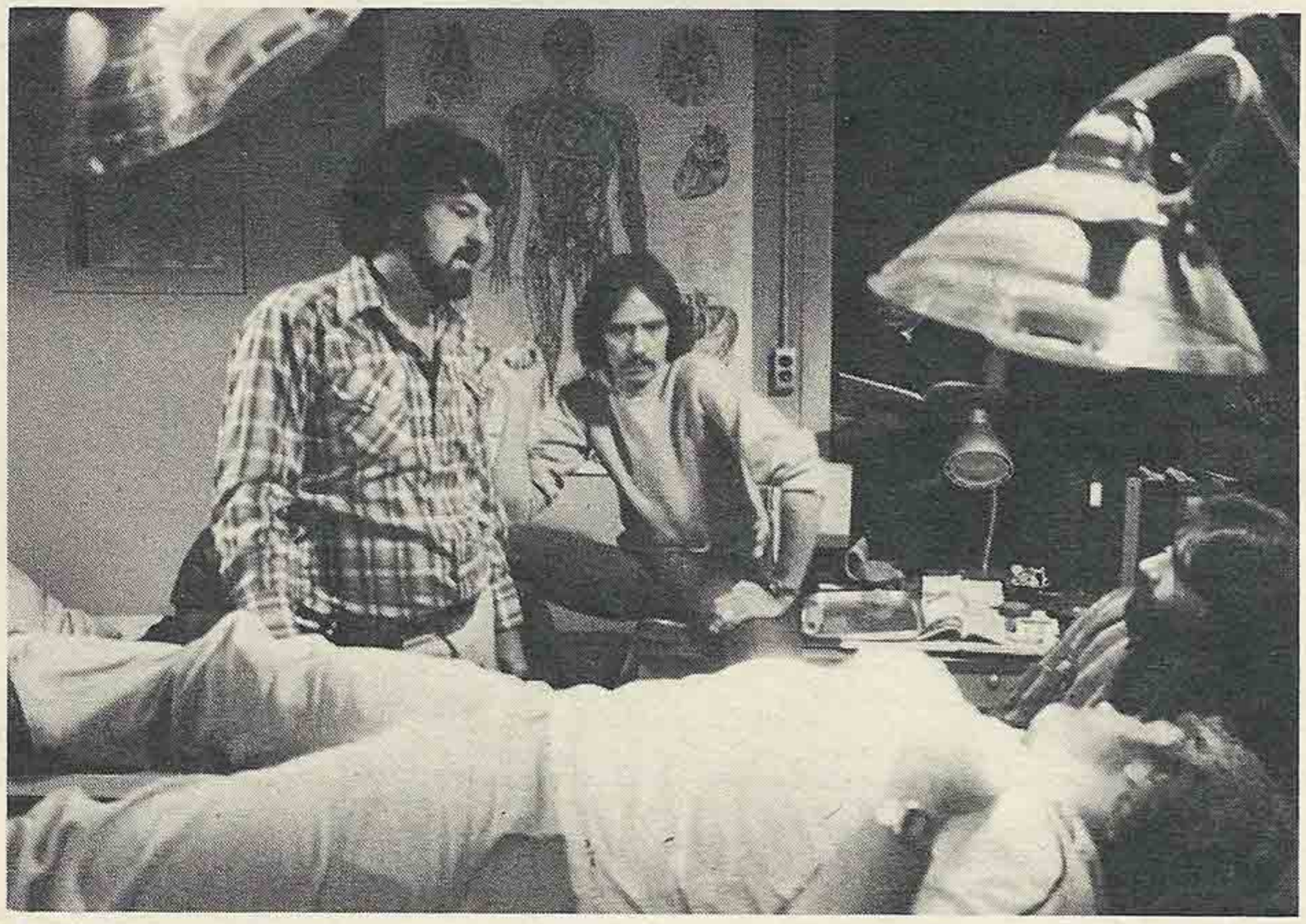
Supervising the mechanical aspects of Bottin's shop was Dave Kelsey, who did effects work on TV's *The Incredible Hulk*. The makeup aspects were coordinated by Ken Diaz (whom Bottin refers to as "purveyor of ripping flesh and nasty gore extraordinaire"). Gunnar Ferdinansen oversaw moldmaking duties, and Bottin's longtime friend Margaret Beserra was in charge of all the painting and hair work. Says Beserra, "Everybody did everything, really; there was just so much work to do." Also on the crew was Rob Burman, son of Tom; nephew of Ellis. "When Rob and his friend Dale Brady came in for a job," says Bottin, "I heard that they both had been running foam for Rob's dad, and that Tom was slowing down things at his place to work on his movie *Footsteps*; and I thought, 'Great! If I can't get Tom Burman, I'll get his kid!' We hired Rob (and his friend), and I want to say, he's every bit as professional as his father."

On the list of credits after the picture, one may notice a special "thank you" to special makeup effects artist Stan Winston. Bottin hired Winston to take some pressure off of the crew on a particular effects segment. Says Bottin, "It got to the point where I was thinking 'if I have to do another stinking mechanical dog, I'll go nuts!' so, I asked John if we could use Stan. He said yes. What was interesting was that it was kind of like being a director and hiring an effects guy for

Bottin pays homage to his werewolf origins, as he prepares to snack on the unfortunate Norwegian.



The head of Norris makes a spectacular exit, stage left.



With Hallahan in place, Dean Cundey, Carpenter and Bottin block out the scene that will lead into the elaborate effects sequence. Since the effects were filmed as a separate unit, all three men had to pay extra attention to detail in order to insure a perfect match.

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my own movie. I told Stan what I had in mind, and just let him go. I didn't even go over to his shop. I'd told him to call me when he was done; and when I saw it, I was blown away! I mean, he walks in with this outrageous dog-monster on his arm, and I just loved it!" Winston's contribution is one of the effects early on in the film, and it helps to set the tone quite well for upcoming mayhem.

Virtually every makeup effect that has ever been used in a movie is in *The Thing*. Perhaps even a few that haven't, but Bottin is quick to disagree with that statement. "The special effects man on the film, Roy Arbogast *(Jaws, CE3K)*, taught me a lot on this movie, but what he made clearest, was that there really is nothing new. I would be talking with him and people in his crew who were—what I felt—*inventing* things every day, and I'd ask them how they came up with their ideas, and a guy would say 'Are you kidding? We used that gag back in the 30's on such-and-such a movie,' or 'so-and-so did this 50 years ago!' They pretty much let me know that it's not a question of whether it's been done before, because it probably has. It's *how* you choose to do it now. Everything I've put in a movie has been done somewhere else. For instance, I got the idea for the wolf's nose elongating in *The Howling*, from an effect Stan Winston and Tom Burman did on Sandy Duncan in *Pinocchio* (a prosthetic nose that grew)." Bottin won't disagree, however, with the fact that *The Thing*'s audience will surely get their money's worth, if special makeup effects are what they come to see.

During the filming of *The Thing*, Bottin and his crew encountered their share of problems, some of them somewhat humorous in retrospect (heavy emphasis on the word "retrospect"). For example, Bottin described a mishap involving a mechanical puppet, much like the ones in *The Howling* and *American Werewolf*. "The effect we eventually got this thing to do is remarkable It sort of wastes itself before your eyes." It took many months of trial-and-error testing to get the mechanism to work properly (to Bottin's liking), and huge amounts of foam rubber were needed. "Rob Burman had three Hobart mixers going constantly so we could keep cranking these things out to test on video tape," Rob explains. "Finally, we got it so that we were satisfied it would work for John in front of the camera. There we were, months later, with the producers all looking at their watches and getting edgy. We set it up, got the lighting perfect; John was on top of the camera checking the angle one last time. Everything was ready to go—except that there was supposed to be fire in the scene, so we called in one of the effects guys to set up a fire-bar, which is a hollow metal bar with holes in it, hooked up to a tank of butane." While the effects man was attempting to light the fire-bar, the fumes of the chemicals that were inside the puppet (that no one had realized were highly flammable), had filled the small room where they were set up. "John gave the cues," smiles Bottin, "and when the fire-bar finally ignited, a huge ball of fire—it must've been eight feet in diameter—engulfed the puppet. I just stood there, dumbfounded. All I could say was 'It's—it's on fire . . .' After a beat everyone started yelling 'Put it out, you idiot!' We had to shut down for two hours to clean up the mess." Fortunately, no one was injured. Also fortunate was the fact that the puppet sustained relatively minor damage, and they were able to get the shot. "Every now and then," says Rob, "John will look at me and say, 'It—it's on fire . . .' "

The Thing was sneak-previewed in Las Vegas and Denver shortly before our interview, and appeared to be well-received. Bottin saw his designs on screen—with an objective audience—in Las Vegas, and some of their reactions he found to be rather amusing, particularly after the picture ended. Bottin was listening to a pair of youngsters discussing one of the scenes in which the Thing does a pretty nasty number on some sled-dogs (mechanical dogs were used to get the effects). Rob recounts, "I heard one guy ask the other, 'Did you see what they did to those poor dogs?' But what I heard the other guy reply, I thought, was even funnier—in a sick kind of way. He said, 'Yeah, but it was *necessary;*' like we wasted live dogs for realism!" Bottin grins. "It's okay with me if they want to think that. It just means that the effect worked." Bottin also heard people commenting on Randy Cook's superb stop-motion animation, but the scenes he heard described were *not* animated; a tribute both to the execution of Bottin's crew, and to Cook's animation techniques.

There is no doubt that there are some—to say the least—shocking sequences in *The Thing*. "When I was reading the script," says Bottin, "I thought, 'This movie could be really terrible to watch;' I mean, not only are there five transformations of the caliber of the ones in *The Howling*, but there's a lot of metamorphoses, and it couldn't help but be bloody." He pointed out to Carpenter that if they were to add a lot of blood to what was already there, the film would surely recieve an X rating. Carpenter asked him what he would do. "I suggested we play it more fantasy," says Bottin. "In other words, when something bursts open, or changes, the insides don't look like they really should. So, we ended up using these wild colors. Blood makes you turn away, almost as a reflex; but the colors sort of draw your attention."

Bottin says he's not a big fan of gore, but he's not offended by it, because, he explains, he is so close to his work, and to him, it's all so technical that he doesn't see it the way others might. "But when you're in the theatre," says Rob, "sitting next to somebody and their kid, and they turn to that kid and say 'Okay, let's go, this is offending my senses,' then I see what they mean; then it's not just rubber and Karo

(Continued on Page 69)

Credit Where Credit's Due

While space does not permit us to detail everyone's contributions to *The Thing*, Rob Bottin requests that we acknowledge the tireless work of his fabulous crew—

SPECIAL MAKE-UP EFFECTS UNIT

Line Producer ..... ERIK JENSEN
Coordinators
Mechanical Animation ..... DAVE KELSEY
Special Make-Up Effects ..... KEN DIAZ
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Ingrid Pitt

PHOTO: © 1971 AMICUS

The Spectacular Hammer Femme Fatale.

By David Everitt

Hammer Films could never be accused of not employing enough fetching heroines of horror. Names such as Ursula Andress, Veronica Carlson and Martine Beswick are sure to arouse excitable memories in any red-blooded male who lived a good portion of his life watching monster movies in the 60's and 70's. But perhaps the most alluring combination of beauty and talent at the Hammer film factory during this period was the enticing Ingrid Pitt who has attracted a cult following that persists some 10 years after her last Hammer feature.

One of the reasons why this actress is such an interesting case among the legion of Hammer heroines is that she managed to make such a vivid impression as a femme fatale with only two Hammer pictures, *The Vampire Lovers* and *Countess Dracula*. For a wide-eyed high school horror fan in 1971, as was the case with yours truly, the experience of watching *The Vampire Lovers* was unique and arresting. Hammer movies, previously famous for low-cut dresses in addition to violence and gore, always had their share of implied eroticism, but *The Vampire Lovers* was something different altogether. The introduction of nudity and lesbianism coupled with the usual impressive Hammer production values in *The Vampire Lovers* added a powerful sensuality to the already sexually charged vampire legend, and the embodiment of this new eroticism, Ingrid Pitt as the mysterious vampiress Carmilla, was clearly something more than a flash-in-the-pan starlet. Both voluptuous and skillful in her craft, with an intriguing Polish tinge to her English accent to add to her appeal, she conveyed the presence of a very human evil that was as dramatic as it was sultry.

Speaking to her over the telephone, I was quickly impressed by her graciousness and intelligence. She comes across as a resourceful woman who has been able to rely on more than one creative talent. In addition to acting, she is a published author of both fiction and history, has written for the screen (presently a script of hers is on call for a potential second series of *Hammer House of Horror),* and has been involved in theatrical producing. Judging by her description of her early years, this resourcefulness seems to have evolved quite naturally from the unusual circumstances and problems she faced while growing up in Europe.

Ingrid Pitt spent her early childhood in Poland during World War II when that country was devastated first by the Nazis and then by the Soviets. She was separated from her parents during the war and, at the age of 10, was taken to East Berlin by the Red Cross and reunited with her family. Interestingly, after the brutal experience of war and its aftermath, she was very much put off by peace-time city life. When she reached the city she says "humdrum life started; one had to go to school and there was no longer any sort of adventurous excitement of hunting for food and roaming around the countryside and the forests in Poland. Once I got to the city, the whole thing seemed quite sudden and strange; I had never experienced anything like it before. I think probably because of the dreamy kind of life I had led before I went to Germany, I wanted to escape the gray reality that I lived in ever since I was reunited with my parents."

This escape from reality took the form of the make-believe world of acting. Pitt says, "I always wanted to be an actress, though at first I didn't know quite what that meant because when I was a child I had never seen a film or theater or anything like that. But I wanted to entertain other people, because I had done it very successfully." Her decision in Berlin to take up acting was not a career choice that was very much appreciated by her mother. "Everyone in my family was a scientist," she explains, "and I was expected to follow in that direction: go to school, get a degree, so forth." Pitt succeeded in eluding what was expected of her by becoming a member of the Berlin Ensemble theatrical company.

Although she had now become involved in the profession that she wanted to pursue, more problems faced her that would test her determination to live according to her own beliefs. When asked if she remembers when she decided to cross over to West Berlin, Pitt responds quickly by saying, "Yes. On the 21st of November 1962." She regards political schooling in East Berlin as a chief reason for this decision. "If you are in any iron curtain country," Pitt says, "you have to take part in political schooling and I found I wasn't capable of coping with that at all, of amalgamating the artistic part of the theater with the political environment of the country I lived in, and I said so on various occasions. And, if you know about Eastern Bloc countries, you'll know that if you believe in free speech then you've got some very big trouble. In the end I endangered not only myself but others as well. So it was a case of either leaving home or going to some sort of political camp." She ended up crossing the border illegally by swimming across the River Spee.

PHOTO: © 1969 MGM

Pitt's first prominent American movie role was featured alongside Clint Eastwood in *Where Eagles Dare.*

From Berlin Pitt went to America where she toured for a while with a theatrical company. When that company went broke she moved on to Spain and landed her first movie role. "I was discovered somehow," she recalls, "at a bullfight for a film about an American tourist who was a bullfighting groupie. The director saw a picture of me at this bullfight in the newspaper and found me through the photographer who lived next to me in the same block of flats. I got that part and that was really how my film career started."

While in Spain she appeared in such films as *Chimes at Midnight,* a horror picture called *The Prehistoric Sound,* several Spaghetti Westerns, and also found more legitimate work in the National Theater of Spain in Madrid. She had small parts in *Doctor Zhivago* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum,* but didn't get a significant speaking role in an American film until she played opposite Clint Eastwood and Richard Burton in *Where Eagles Dare* in 1969. The movie was very successful and Pitt's part in the picture could conceivably have led to immediate greater success in films, but unfortunately movie fans would not get to see her in a starring role until two years later. The actress says, "The most disappointing time of my life, I think, happened directly after *Where Eagles*

PHOTO: © 1971 HAMMER FILMS

Peter Cushing prepares to destroy Pitt's Carmilla in *The Vampire Lovers.*

A woman who can fend for herself, Carmilla the vampire grapples with one of her enemies from the land of the living.

Dare. I thought that pink clouds had arrived at last and they really hadn't at all. There was absolute stagnation. I went back to Madrid to finish my contract with the theater there, and then came back to London. Some political murders had taken place in Madrid at the time and I didn't want my child to live in that kind of environment. I had gotten clever advice from Brian Hutton and Elliott Kastner [director and producer respectively of *Where Eagles Dare*] who said I should live in America or I wouldn't actually benefit from having made *Where Eagles Dare*. Instead I went to London and I couldn't get a job to save my life."

This terrible dry spell came to an end when Pitt met James Carreras of Hammer Films at a function. She wryly remembers that she pursued him "to such an extent that he said, 'What do you want, blood?' And I said, 'Right.' He then said, 'I've got two or three parts for you. Come and see me.' " With great sincerity she then adds, "He really helped me tremendously by giving me these films at a time when I just didn't know how to feed my kid and make ends meet."

The end result of this career slump and the subsequent meeting with Carreras was Ingrid Pitt's entrance into the ranks of favorite femme fatales in *The Vampire Lovers*. Based on Sheridan Le Fanu's classic horror story "Carmilla," which had been previously adapted for the screen in *Blood and Roses* (1961) and *Terror in the Crypt* (1963), *The Vampire Lovers* revolved around the bloodthirsty and erotic exploits of a beautiful female vampire. In the opening to the film, a family of the living dead, the evil Karnsteins, is destroyed by a vengeful Baron, but one member of the feared clan manages to escape, Mircalla Karnstein. In two other locales, Mircalla reappears, first under the anagram alias of Marcilla then under the name of Carmilla, and charms her way into wealthy households where she puts young women under her spell and, during sensual encounters, drains them of their blood. In the end she is run to earth by Peter Cushing who, drawing upon his considerable experience accumulated from many another vampire adventure, dispatches Carmilla in no uncertain terms by driving a stake through her heart and then slicing off her head with his sword.

The Vampire Lovers was successful enough to inspire two sequels about the Karnstein clan and, in particular, its women, that were titled *Lust for a Vampire* and *Twins of Evil* (both without the aid of Pitt), but neither follow-up managed to match the first film's flair for revitalizing the classical vampire legend. The one area in which the sequels did match the original was in the amount of nudity, which at times seemed to be the sole reason for making both pictures. Pitt says she wasn't bothered by the nude scenes required in *The Vampire Lovers* because they were well integrated into the story. "I think I like nudity better than coyness," she says. "In both *Vampire Lovers* and *Countess Dracula* I think it was quite important that the characters took their clothes off in certain scenes. I also liked the fact that the directors were considerate and had a closed set and shot the scenes well." With a laugh she goes on to say, "I also think too that it's wonderful when you become an old lady to see your old movies and see how beautiful your body was at one time."

One of the sensual vampiric bouts from *The Vampire Lovers*.

PHOTO: © 1972 HAMMER FILMS

As *Countess Dracula*, Pitt's features shrivel into old age when the rejuvenating effect of virgins' blood wears off.

Pitt's second movie for Hammer was *Countess Dracula* which had nothing to do with Dracula but instead was based upon the gruesome practices of a 16th century Eastern European countess by the name of Elizabeth Bathory. This countess believed she could stay youthful if she bathed in the blood of freshly killed virgins; in the fantasized film version the blood baths turn the aged, wrinkled countess into a young woman as lovely as Ingrid Pitt. Pitt believes, "*Countess Dracula* stands up to time. I think it's got lovely production values and it's got a tremendous plot, but I think, for one thing, that the director just didn't want to make a Hammer film; he wanted to be Eisenstein, and I don't think that worked. I think the horror is not enough. I think the blood I wipe across my face is ridiculous; having a woman's wrists slit and drained of nine liters of blood is ridiculous. I think the story is great, but this awful scene of the whore lying in the bathtub with her wrists cut and the panning shot to this big bowl full of blood, and the totally dry sponge being wiped across my face with a tiny spot of red on it—well, it just gets a lot of laughs. One should've, I suppose, hung her up by her feet and cut her throat to let the blood flow out. I just found it very sad that one couldn't go all the way with the horror aspect. Otherwise, I think the film is terrific."

Pitt was also not very pleased with the way the emotional climax of the film was handled. "In the scene where the countess goes mad, it's intercut with other scenes, and I think the power of this rising insanity in the woman is very much lessened by the intercutting. I think that's basically why I started writing. The actor is the victim of the writer, he has to sort of follow the writer's storyline. You just have no control whatsoever over what you do. And I think the scene of the countess alone in her room at the castle in her mental anguish was fantastic. When I saw it on the screen, I could've cried; it was all chopped up. The power of the agony of this very sad creature I think got lost."

Once the movie was completed, a descendant of Elizabeth Bathory came forward—regrettably, too late, as far as Pitt is concerned. "If he had come to us before he could have helped us tremendously. He had a lot of family research in archives. I talked to him over the telephone quite a few times and he had so many stories to tell about her. Later, when Christopher Lee and I went to Rumania, we saw the place where the countess was walled up—she wasn't hanged at all—she was walled up, and the villagers say you can still hear her wailing," Pitt puts on a faraway, spooky voice, " 'Let me out . . . Let me out . . .' " She then laughs, "Oh, those Rumanians, they're incredible! But I never heard her wailing, even though I went back up there at night and sat there for hours."

After her two films with Hammer, Pitt then appeared as a member of the isolated Scottish community that has reverted to paganism in *The Wicker Man* (in a role that was significantly abbreviated in later edited versions of the film) and played a starring role in the final comic episode of the Amicus horror anthology film, *The House that Dripped Blood*. In this last picture, written by Robert Bloch, Pitt plays a horror star who, while portraying a movie vampire comes across a very real case of vampirism. Pitt regards this film as her favorite because it gave her a

The English paperback edition of Pitt's espionage novel featured the actress' face on the cover.

chance to do comedy.

The film industry in Britain, plagued by various financial difficulties, went into a severe slump in the 70's that adversely affected many people, including Ingrid Pitt. In her own words: "No one would give me a bloody job, it was as simple as that." During these lean times for British movie professionals, Pitt did a great deal of acting in the theater (she would also help her husband produce several plays), and began to pursue a literary career as well. She has published an adventure novel entitled *Cuckoo Run* which she describes as "a female James Bond type story. I suppose she's a cross between Modesty Blaise and a female James Bond, only she depends on men and her own abilities in spying rather than gadgets." Pitt also spent a long time in South America researching a very comprehensive study of former Argentinian president Juan Peron, which will be published this fall. In this book, entitled *The Perons,* Pitt is concerned with establishing Peron's rightful place in South American history as she chronicles the rise to power and subsequent exile of a man who, she says, "is now finally being acclaimed as the first and last democratic leader of Argentina. He was re-elected three times democratically. No one else can say that. The Argentinians believe he was born to become president."

Ingrid Pitt—1982.

Horror fiction is another area that Pitt is pursuing as a writer, a venture which could reunite her with Hammer. The television series *Hammer House of Horror* was broadcast in this country on pay cable TV and a second 13-episode series is presently being prepared. If the project is solidified and goes into production, one of Pitt's scripts will be filmed. She can't disclose at this time what the episode will be about but she is able to say that it is a psychological horror story, the type of horror that has always interested her: "The human mind intrigues me a great deal; it's such an incredible maze of positive thinking and diabolical depths of negativism. I think all of that plays a part in a plot and that, I think, is very interesting. I have done a gothic horror story for *Hammer House of Horror,* for instance, but again it's not fangs and garlic cloves; it's really a mental conflict. That, to me, is real horror." Ingrid Pitt fans will be pleased to know that this script would also make use of her acting. "I cherish the part I wrote for myself," she says. "It would really be great, a new comeback for me. It's a good story if I may say so myself."

This shot of Ingrid Pitt as the East German terrorist in *Who Dares Wins* provides a glimpse of the actress' emotional range displayed in recent character parts.

In the meantime, Pitt can be seen in the new picture called *Who Dares Wins,* which is the motto of the S.A.S., the special British military troop that played an important part recently in the reclaiming of the Falklands. The movie is about a commando team's efforts to liberate the American Embassy after it has been captured by British terrorists. Pitt plays an East German terrorist who is a trained weapons specialist. At the end of this summer she will also be seen in the BBC adaptation of John Le Carre's *Smiley's People* with Sir Alec Guinness. With this new exposure, along with the possible rejuvenation of *Hammer House of Horror,* Ingrid Pitt's many talents may be placed back in the limelight, which, as horror fans have always known, is exactly where they belong.

Of Roaches And Snakes

Effects Man and Insect Wrangler Ray Mendez Tells About his Work on Death Bite *and* Creepshow.

By David Everitt

"I've always been into insects," says Ray Mendez. "I grew up in New York City loving ants, beetles and stuff like that. Part of the reason, I think, is that, living downtown on the east side, whenever I got to see something alive other than a person or a rat it was a real thrill." This love of insects, coupled with a fascination with reptiles, was not exactly the sort of hobby that would help him blend in with the other kids in his section of the city. Mendez recalls, "I grew up in a real rough and tough neighborhood where to be into wildlife was just not cool; so I had this double life: I had this interest which I didn't tell anybody about except for a couple of close friends who were also interested, and then there was stickball and everything else." When, at the age of 14, Mendez was introduced to people working at the Museum of Natural History who shared his passion, he found a way of channeling his interests that led to a job as a naturalist at the museum which in turn has led eventually to exciting movie work on *Creepshow* and *Death Bite*.

Ray Mendez has worked on the intricate diaramas for the Museum of Natural History (where he now serves as a Field Research Associate in the Department of Entomology), was a consultant for the insect zoo at the Smithsonian Institute, and has done a great deal of wildlife photography for magazines as well as model-making and insect wrangling for TV commercials. One of his advertisements that FANGORIA readers are familiar with is the poster for *ALIEN* for which he constructed the egg model. His apartment contains a room filled with tanks of insects and lizards, a bathtub housing a small pack of tortoises, and a pair of iquanas that have the run of the house. This dedication to the study of insects and reptiles proved to be the qualification that brought him into the special effects production of the upcoming monster-snake picture *Death Bite*.

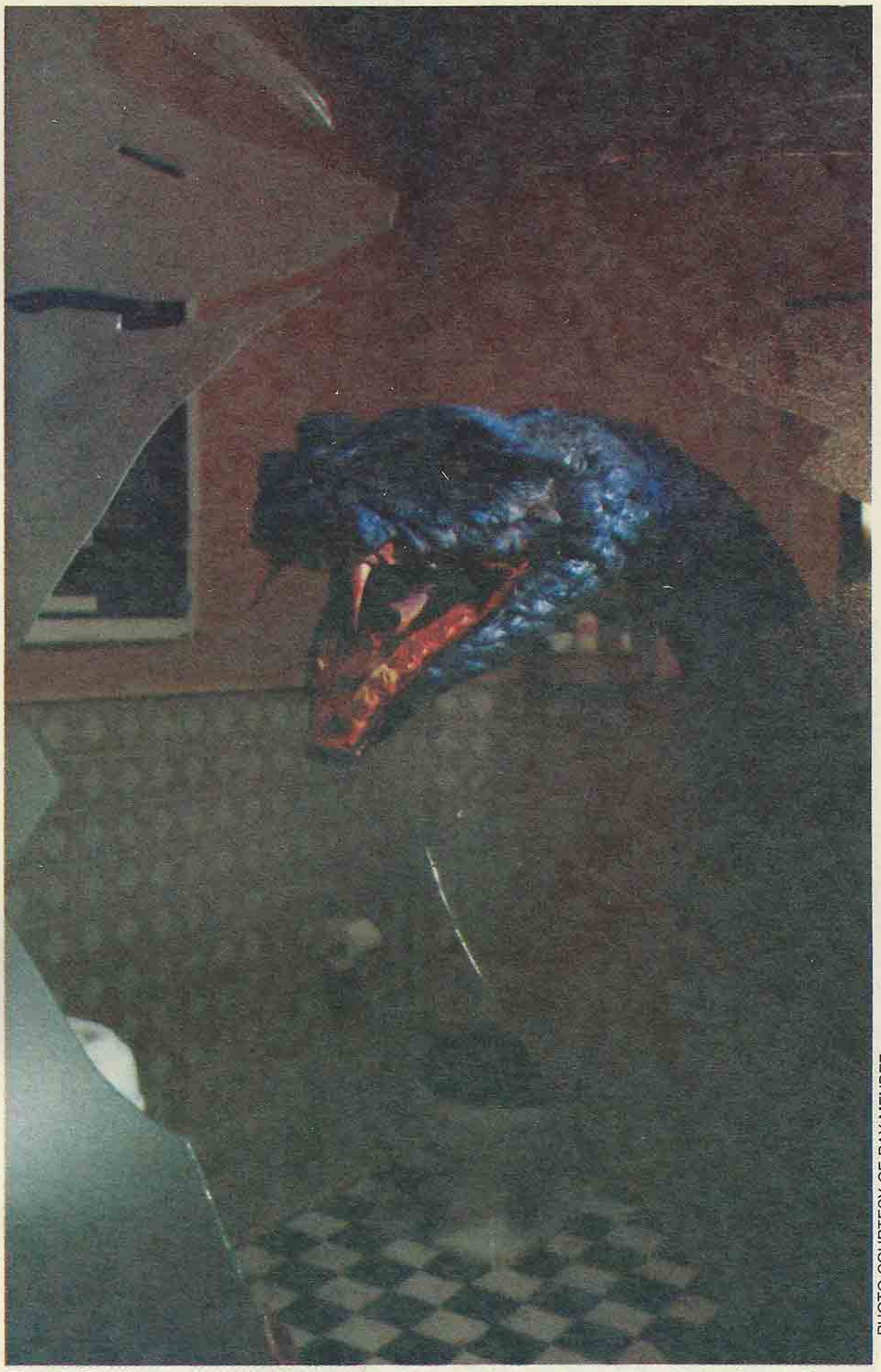

PHOTO COURTESY OF RAY MENDEZ

***Death Bite*'s monster snake bursts through the bathroom wall thanks to the efforts of Ray Mendez and his crew.**

Mendez's first contact with this project was simply as a friendly advisor. Someone he knew who had worked in the Staten Island Zoo called him up one night to say that the authors of the novel *Death Bite* were interested in making a puppet of the oversized snake featured in their story, to be used just as a plaything. Mendez offered advice on how the snake should move and what materials might be used for the construction. Later on, Mendez came to meet the authors and eventually was told that a movie was going to be produced from the book. As Mendez puts it, "it was a gradual process of making meetings" until he met the people making the picture and he was hired to construct the star of the movie.

Mendez, at that point, had had a great deal of experience in model-making and special effects, but had not taken on a feature-length project of this magnitude. He says, "I've done every part of this job in the past, a little bit for one job, a little bit for another, so it was just a matter of putting it all together." Once the preproduction for *Death Bite*

got under way, the nature of Mendez's task then changed as the story for the picture was overhauled.

According to Mendez, the director, William Fruett, decided there were too many snake movies coming out and that *Death Bite* would have to be somehow different from thrillers like *Venom*. In the original novel, the creature was a larger-than-usual snake (22 feet long) that, for all its lethal power and speed, was a plausible exaggeration of an actual species. The animal eventually built by Mendez and his crew, however, was a supernatural monster.

In the story that made it to the screen, Oliver Reed plays a collector who, with his brother, goes to an island in the South Pacific to hunt down a legendary snake. The natives of this island perform a ritual to exorcise evil spirits which involves the snake, a creature of enormous and grotesque proportions. During the encounter with this monster, Reed's brother is killed and Reed just manages to survive an attack by the beast. After he returns home, Reed finds that the horror of the experience lingers in the form of terrible dreams and fantasies. He believes he has somehow picked up the evil spirit of the snake and he decides that the only way he can free himself of this obsession is by capturing the creature and, with the aid of a psychologist (Peter Fonda), confronting his nemesis under scientific conditions on his home ground. The snake is captured and brought back, but a devil cult decides they must have the monster in their possession to be part of their nefarious ceremonies. The snake escapes during the process of the abduction and an unearthly danger is unleashed.

When the producers first considered what they wanted from the construction of their devil-snake, their plans were somewhat unrealistic. As Mendez

PHOTO COURTESY OF RAY MENDEZ

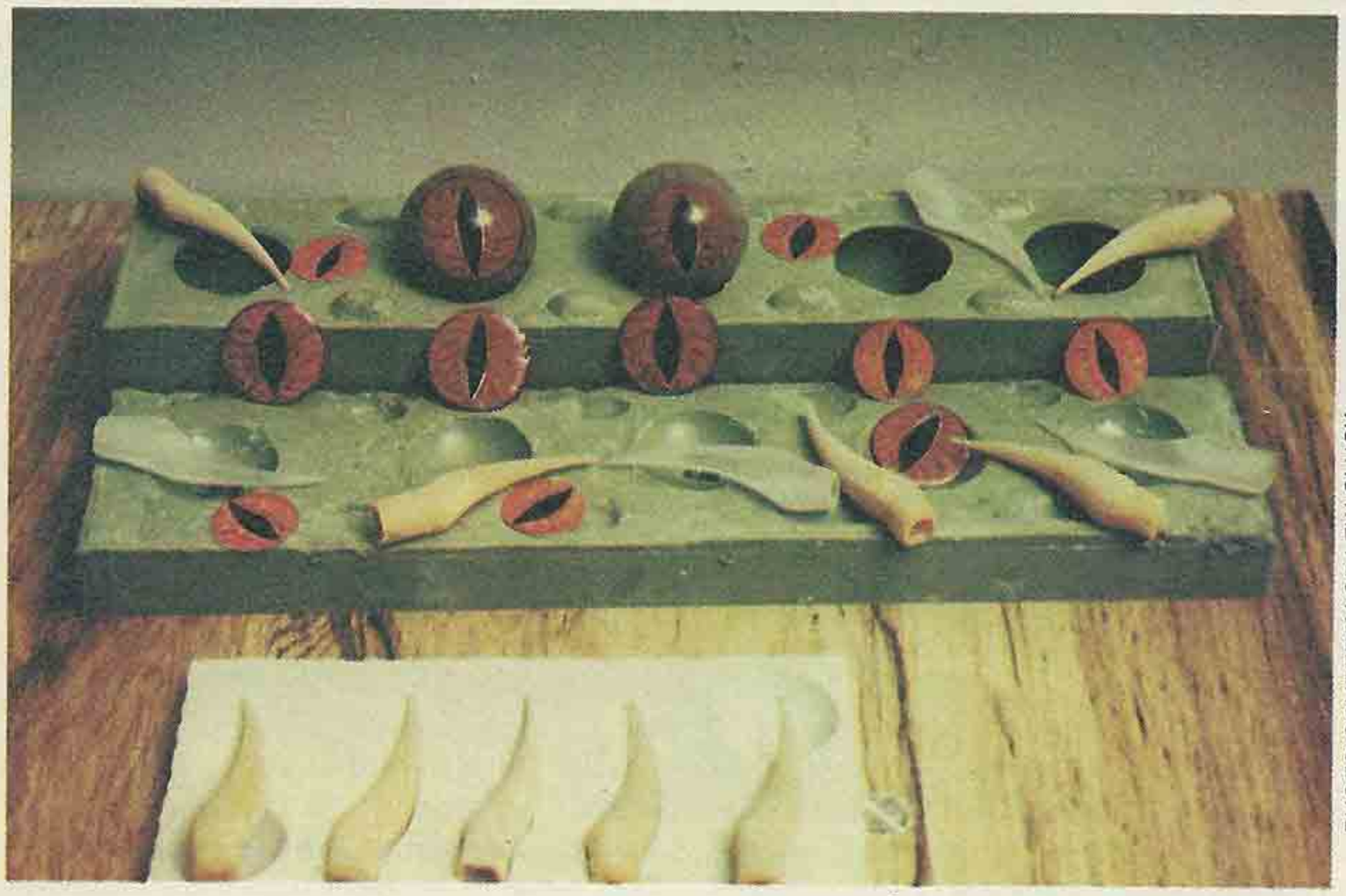

PHOTO COURTESY OF LEW GLUCK

Above: Tom Savini's dummy of E.G. Marshall is over-run with over-sized roaches in *Creepshow*'s harrowing finale. Uncle Bob tells us that the *Creepshow* was force-fed hundreds of peanuts to supply an under-layer of stand-in bugs for this scene. Left: Mendez's set of carefully designed and constructed eyes and fangs for the *Death Bite* snake.

laughingly remarks, "Producers always want monsters that can come up and shake hands, serve dinner, wear a tuxedo, and conquer the world. So we gave them a few modifications on that." Mendez's primary concern was that, even though he was dealing with a supernatural creature, he wanted it to look very realistic. "I'm a naturalist first," he says, "and I didn't want another monster that opens its mouth and there's a saucer plate inside. I wanted it to be real." Helping him on the realistic design of the creature was Neal Martz.

Another key member of the effects crew had to be brought in when Mendez realized the range of capabilities that the concept of the snake required. The original idea of constructing a puppet was no longer satisfactory for a monster of this size and flexibility (an arm inside a puppet could not possibly duplicate the fluid motion of a snake). The monster had to be a robot and Mendez called in Lew Gluck to take charge of the mechanics. Gluck was a fine artist who became interested in mechanical gadgetry when working with handicapped children; he concocted a robot arm with which children with limited hand motion could make drawings. For *Death Bite,* Gluck constructed a hydraulic system involving two generators to mobilize the oversized mock snake.

For special assistance on certain details of the monster, Mendez was fortunate enough to be able to turn to Dick Smith who engineered the special makeup effects for the picture. Mendez says that Smith helped "with formulas, types of rubber, eyes, types of glue, and where to get materials. He was really an incredible person to have on the phone—very important." The makeup of the snake involved an inner skeleton of polyester resin and fiberglass, and an aluminum body skeleton covered by R and D foam. For the outer skin, Mendez decided that "in order to get the realism I wanted we should put on scales, individual scales, made of latex. We cast thousands and thousands of scales and assembled them on the body in a life-like pattern." This technique generated a great deal of extra work but Mendez found that, in addition to improving the look of the creature, the scales provided a sort of armor to protect the inside of the snake, far more protection than the foam could have supplied. Also, Mendez points out, "since the scales were rigid, you had no idea there was a robot inside because none of the linkages showed up as it moved; the skin was thick enough to totally cover that. So you have beautiful movements, supple and fluid, like the real animal."

The most challenging sequence in the picture for Mendez and company was a scene in which the snake attacks Oliver Reed and swallows the character's arm. Mendez and his crew built an extra neck-and-head assembly that had a specially made skull underneath the rubber skin in addition to a great deal of tubing to supply the mucous and blood necessary for the scene. Mendez explains: "The skull had to be modified in such a way that when the snake swallowed Reed's arm the back of the head opened wide enough for the arm to slide down. We had to recarve the inner rubber so that his arm would fit and then we had to grease it. And it was a really violent scene. It wasn't a matter of 'Let's be delicate with the model;' this man was doing summersaults and going through this whole trip with this thing biting him, and it had to look good."

An essential aspect of the realism of the scene, for Mendez, had to do with the way in which Reed gouged out the snake's eye during the struggle. "Many scenes in movies in which eyes come out," comments Mendez, "usually don't look right to me. The problem with me has always been that, when the eye comes out, it comes out like a ball. I wanted this scene to be a little different. I wanted Reed to stick his finger into the eye and pop it. The snake had a big eye, so I wanted that eye to puncture and open up. What I ended up doing was making a very, very thin, polyester-resin, clear-cast sheet of plastic in the mold. I then put in some jelly right behind that, laying in the cornea, which was a separate plate I had made out of acetate, and then behind that filled it in with K-Y jelly and string and assorted stuff. Then I sealed the whole thing with plastic. This came out very delicate, but it was hard enough so that we could pick it up and set it into the socket. The socket sat in a metal housing which was just the same size as the eye; behind that we had a tube running out and that, of course, had all the blood and everything; we used jelly with some artificial blood in it which we made into a paste and put that behind the eyes. When Reed's fighting with the monster, he sticks his finger in the eye, the eye collapses, white comes out first, and then you see a spurt of blood, which is very different than just having the eye roll out of the socket; a little bit gorier. Oliver Reed's a real character [laughs]; he sprayed the entire camera crew with blood, he drenched them. He really did a number on them."

Horror fans will probably be able to see all this reptilian mayhem in the fall, according to the expectations of *Death Bite* producer John Newton at the time of this writing. Before the release of *Death Bite,* however, movie-goers can see some of Mendez's handiwork in what may be the horror smash of the summer, Romero and King's *Creepshow*. Mendez was involved in the last of the five stories in the picture which

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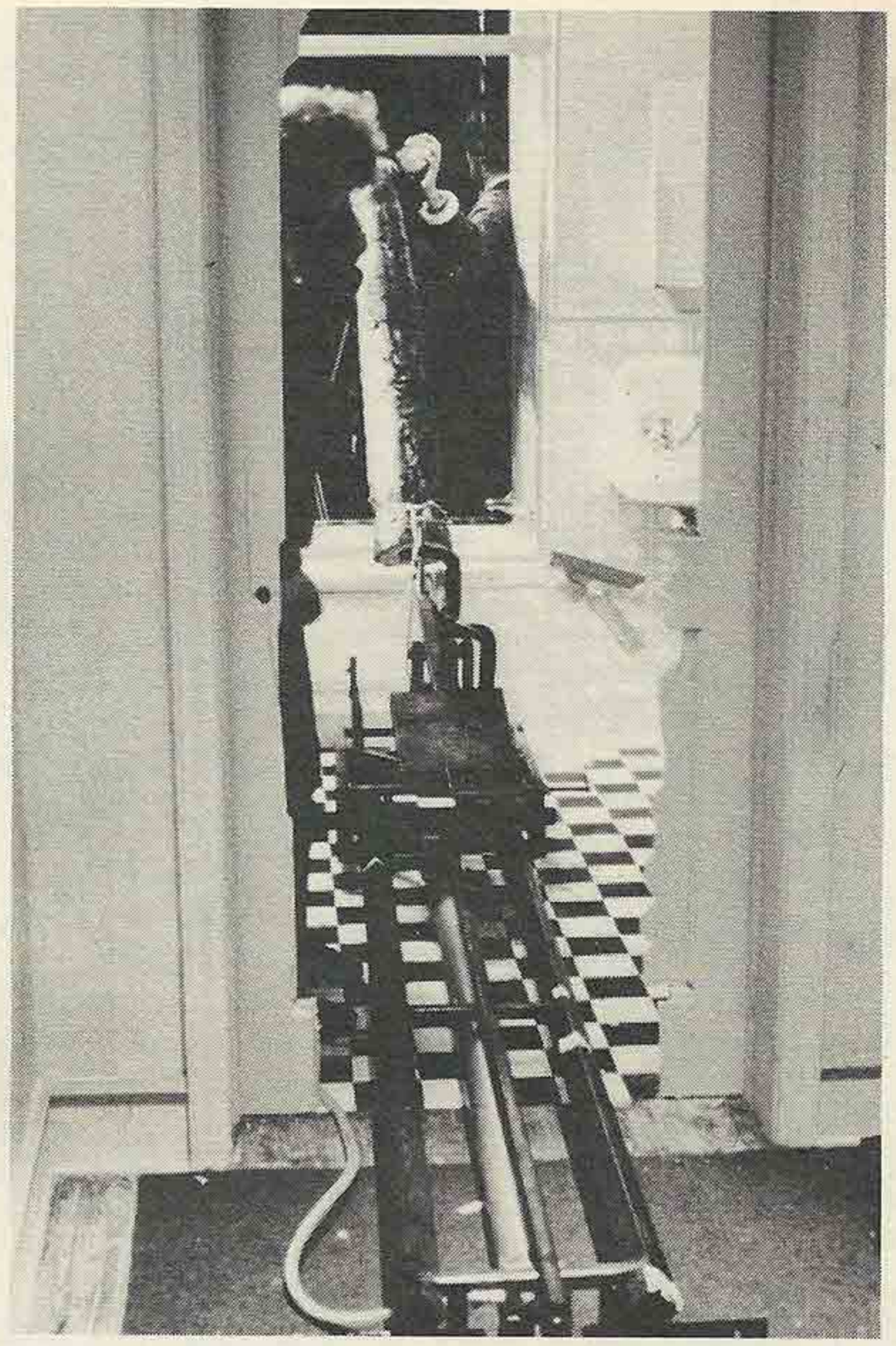
PHOTO BY RICHARD PAN

Mechanics expert Lew Gluck operates the inner robot of the snake for *Death Bite*. While perfecting the robotics, a false head was used instead of risking damage to the delicate, fully mobile head.



For scenes in which the snake burst through walls, this specially designed track was employed.

stars E.G. Marshall as an eccentric, New York City multi-millionaire whose spotless, sterile sanctuary is violated by a city dweller's very real nightmare: an army of cockroaches.

While most people are desperately trying to get rid of roaches, Mendez's job as roach wrangler on this picture was to not only search them out, but buy them. "We bought just about every single adult roach bred in the United States," Mendez says. "There are all these farms that breed roaches for schools, where they use them for dissections and experiments. So we bought 16, 17 thousand roaches—that's over a 100 pounds of roaches!" To supplement this enormous batch, and to add to the horror of his scenes, Mendez made a trip to Trinidad to collect cases of giant tropical cockroaches. One breed measured around three inches long and the other about four or five inches. The smaller of these two types had to be found in vampire-bat caves. In these caves, which could very easily serve as settings for horror movies themselves, the roaches fed on blood left by the vampire bats as well as on dead bat bodies. Mendez and his partner David Brody used mining helmets fitted with lights to herd the bugs into a corner where they then picked out the choicest specimens by hand. In order to get permission to bring these creatures into the country, Mendez had to guarantee that they would all be destroyed at the end of production.

On the set of *Creepshow* the three different sizes of roaches came to be known as Steve, George and Richard. Since Stephen King was the author of the movie, his name was applied to the larger of the two breeds of Trinidad roaches; in recognition of Romero's position as director, the next largest became known as George; and the smallest, the American roaches (which were only small by comparison to the tropical giants) were called Richard, in reference to the production assistant who acted as liaison with many people on the set.

When asked if he had somehow learned to like cockroaches while growing up in New York City, Mendez says, "I never had a phobia about them. But *Creepshow* really tested me." In one scene a swarm of roaches was supposed to rush out through a doorway. As Mendez puts it, "At first there's nothing, just a kitchen door, and then a tidal wave of roaches charges into the room. I must have used 6,000 roaches to do this stunt." The results on the set were fairly distressing, even for a dedicated entomologist like Mendez.

Mendez points out up front that an insect wrangler does not train insects. He channels their behavior so that, while they are going about doing what they ordinarily do, they will also do what the wrangler has in mind. For this kitchen-door sequence, Mendez says, "We built a dyke behind me; it was made out of foam core and we put grease on the top so the roaches couldn't climb up. And there I am: I'm dressed in an all-white suit and I'm taped up, with these gloves on, and I've got my bucket of roaches. When you throw down a bucket of roaches, they don't go in any particular direction. They spread out in a circle, 360 degrees. The camera is sitting right above the dyke surrounding the doorway and I'm just out of camera range alongside the door. The roaches run into the kitchen, but they also run this way, that way and all over me! So I'm sitting there and I just close my eyes. I was covered as if with paint; there were four roaches on every millimeter of my body, including all over the top of my head! And I had no mask! I didn't say anything because you can't talk as you're filming. That was the test of my life."

Mendez goes on to say that when the take was over, he stepped out and the entire crew was in total shock. "The guy who was taking stills for the movie didn't take any pictures. He said he was so freaked out that he couldn't even move his camera; he just stood there and looked. After that, I'm now sure I can do *anything* with insects."

The Road Warrior

Producer Byron Kennedy Talks About The Spectacular Sequel to Mad Max.

By David Everitt

The Road Warrior is a futuristic adventure that surpasses even its predecessor *Mad Max* for nightmarish danger and headlong excitement. Although its storyline and tone is very different, *The Road Warrior*, in terms of high-charged thrills, can be described as Australia's *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

Like *Mad Max, The Road Warrior* takes place in a crumbling, anarchic society, devastated by a World War in the Middle East that has destroyed the world's major oil supply. Embittered by the murder of his wife and child, and hardened by his ruthless quest for revenge in his first adventure, Mad Max now roams the wastelands, living by his wits as an amoral scavenger. In this terrible new world, the most valuable commodity is gasoline for which men are willing to kill or be killed. Max comes upon a band of vicious, and not to mention very ugly, marauders laying siege to an armed compound that surrounds a makeshift oil rig. Max becomes involved with the desperate people of the compound and eventually decides to help them break out of their trap.

Mad Max was the most financially successful movie to come out of Australia and *The Road Warrior* now seems to be duplicating that phenomenal box office record. The makers of these pictures are now in a position to take on just about any project they desire. The two men who find themselves in this enviable situation are producer Byron Kennedy and director George Miller.

Before forming a partnership with Miller, Kennedy had founded his own filmmaking company at an early age (after graduating from high school) and had been making television commercials and documentaries. In 1971 he gave a lecture at a summer film school at Melbourne University where Miller happened to be a student. The two men met at that point and, according to Kennedy, they "stayed partners ever since."

The close partnership between Kennedy and Miller is based on a common attitude about moviemaking that was very unusual for Australian filmmakers at the time. Kennedy says, "We primarily want to make movies that we would like to have seen as kids. We don't make movies influenced by peer group pressures or anything like that; we make them from the gut, if you like; make what we want to see, not necessarily what other people want to see." He describes the movies he would have liked to have seen as a kid by saying, "I hated talking in movies. I would walk out of matinees when characters started talking. I always liked to see action, preferably chases, and strong conflict." Although there are others in the Australian film industry who, like Kennedy and Miller, want to make what Kennedy calls traditional Hollywood narrative movies, the vast majority of Australian filmmakers have very different ideas. This majority, Kennedy says,

Mel Gibson returns as the unstoppable Max, now aided by the boomerang-slinging Feral Kid.

PHOTOS: © 1982 WARNER BROTHERS

Bruce Spence plays the Gyro Captain, pilot of a makeshift helicopter, who forms an uneasy alliance with the loner Max.

has its "origin in the European tradition of filmmaking, the sort of slow, almost indulgent movies where there's a lot of dialogue, very much talking heads, whereas I'm almost opposed to dialogue in movies. To a great extent I believe movies should be moving images accompanied by sound effects—and dialogue is an annoyance."

Another ingredient that accounts for the winning combination of Kennedy and Miller is the dovetailing of their respective moviemaking skills. "Basically," Kennedy reports, "we're comprehensivists. One thing I noticed when I first came to see the industry over here in America was how specialized it was. One guy pushed the dolly around or the camera and that's all he did and he does that all his life and knew more about it than anyone in the world; whereas we came from a filmmaking tradition where we had to do the camerawork, do the editing, even the artwork for the titles. George and I are both the same that way. We're able to mesh and assume certain roles fairly easily without saying I'll take care of this side and you'll take that side. We cross over a hell of a lot and that way we sort of work as one." Kennedy's duties on the Mad Max pictures do not fit the stereotypical image of a cigar-smoking producer working out of a lush studio suite. In addition to usual production responsibilities, Kennedy has directed second unit scenes, supervised the laying of the soundtrack, and operated cameras, as well as flying helicopters and performing car stunts.

The first film by Kennedy and Miller to attract widespread attention was a short movie with the intriguing title of "Violence in the Cinema—Part I". Kennedy describes the film as a "tongue-in-cheek satire that was commenting on the violent trend in movies about ten years ago when *Straw Dogs* and *Clockwork Orange* first came on the scene. The violence was handled very explicitly, very gratuitously, but so overly so that it became a joke in itself. In fact, the film was hosted by an actor who was playing the role of a media psychologist; as he was pontificating on the violent trend in films and while he's giving this lecture, there are people coming up and committing various atrocities against him and around

The brutal marauders make use of a wide variety of bizarre weapons.

him as he is continuing to talk, totally oblivious to what's going on." The movie, distributed worldwide, was very successful but, in order to appease some people who didn't quite take the film in the right spirit, signs had to be put up in movie houses warning people that they were about to see something that was horrific and gruesome.

Over a four or five year period, Kennedy and Miller then developed the concept of *Mad Max* from Kennedy's original idea of doing a documentary on car racing to a full blown fictional film about futuristic cops operating along the borders of a horribly disordered society. The experience of making this first feature was very difficult because, says Kennedy, "no one had attempted that kind of film in Australia before. In fact, the overwhelming consensus was that it wouldn't be possible to shoot it. There just weren't the stuntmen, there weren't the experts to do these things." In solving all the problems involved in the extensive action sequences in the picture, Kennedy and Miller strove to make the images as rousing as possible through the dependence on mobile cameras. Kennedy points out, "There's not one shot in either of the Mad Max movies where the camera is on the side of the road, panning as vehicles pass. In every shot the camera is actually in the car or traveling with another car. That's our basic underlying philosophy, that the camera must be a participant so that the audience can participate in the action rather than observe them."

In *The Road Warrior,* this participatory action is enlarged in scale and reaches a new level of excitement. There were a few injuries during the making of the picture, but the action is

Max's most fearsome adversary is the animal-like Wez. On his left wrist he sports a mini-crossbow and on his head a red mohawk.

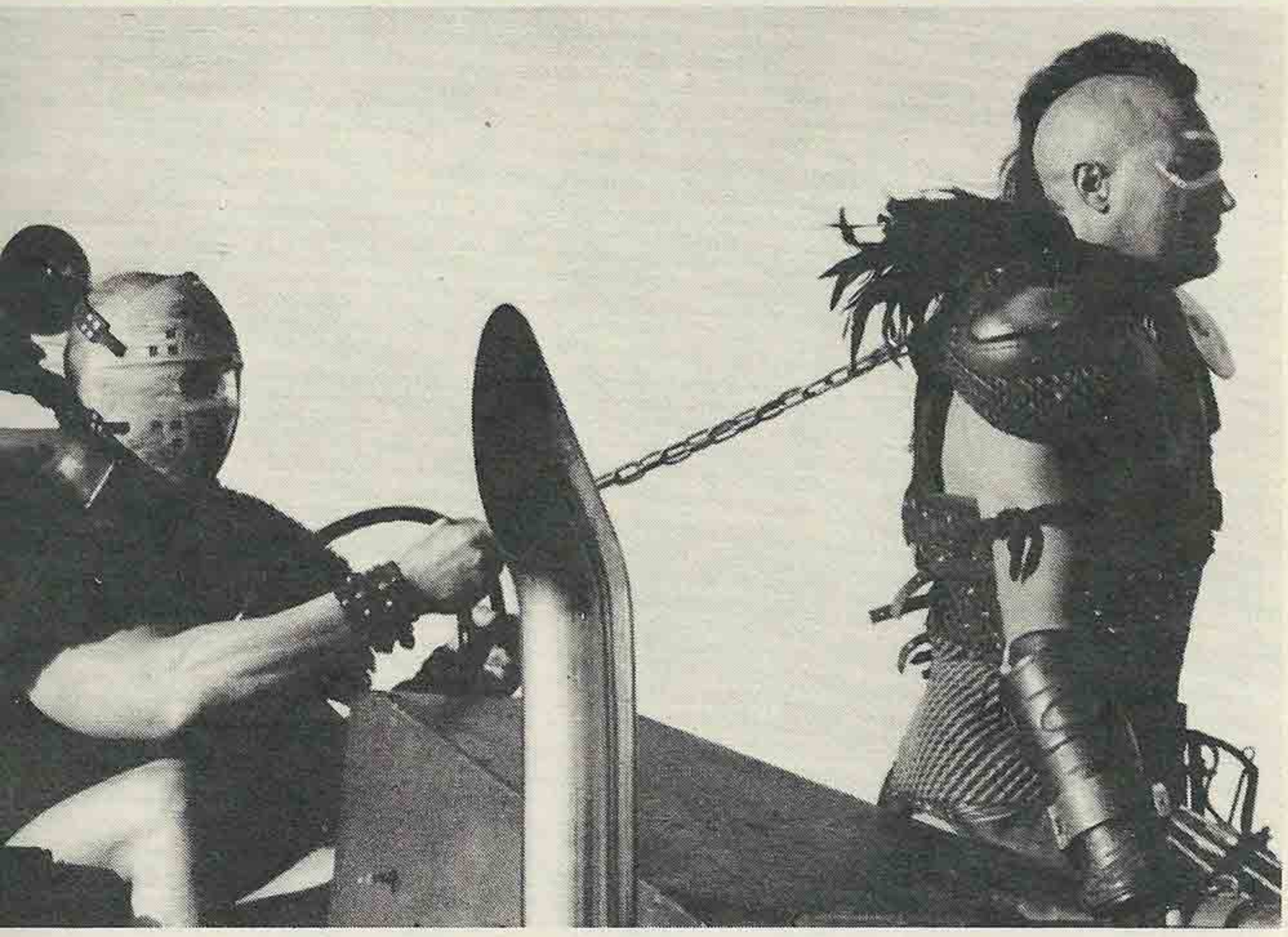
so fierce and so relentless that one would tend to expect that there had been much more injuries, if not a death or two. Kennedy explains that, to a certain extent, the action scenes were made to seem more dangerous on screen than they were in reality through careful use of film craft. The placement of the camera, the editing, the sound effects, and continuous camera movement all contributed to the illusion of danger. He then adds that another factor in the convincing recklessness of these sequences is "that the Australian stuntmen are so enthusiastic, so keyed, that they're basically prepared to do anything. I don't mean to say that they're not scientific, because most of them come from stock car derbies, auto crash shows. The film industry in Australia wasn't big enough to support a permanent bunch of stuntmen specializing in cars so we had to go to a professional car-crashing circuit to get them and they tend to have different ways of doing things that are more spectacular because of the competitive nature of those auto circuits. They've got new and different stunts that are hard to get from people who are in the movies. I believe, particularly in America, they revert to the Starsky-and-Hutch or Dukes-of-Hazzard way of doing it all the time because it's tried and proven. There are not many new ideas in action movies coming out of America. One of the really encouraging things about Australia is its sort of freshness and the fact that most people in the industry have come from other industries and have brought with them new ideas, new concepts."

Some of the new ideas in stuntwork stem from the fact that Australians do not have the luxury of depending on a lot of elaborate physical effects equipment. Kennedy says, "We don't have the equipment down there to roll cars or propel motorcycles by using mortars, as they're called, or cannons. We still do it all with ramps, and the techniques we use for the motorcycle stuff will literally be the actual rider doing it himself. So the technique that we used was to literally stage the sequence as a reality and rely on the skill of the stuntman and the camera angle to enhance it. In some instances we used dummies, but most times the actual person was driving the car—there's no remote-control cars or anything like

Humungus, the marauder chieftain.

Max and the Feral Kid under attack in the cab of a speeding truck.

In a desperate moment, the battered Max relies on his deadly shotgun side-arm.



For defying an order from Humungus, Wez is put on a leash until the final assault erupts.

that—all those major crashes and impact effects were either someone driving the truck and doing the stunt or someone on the motorcycle or in the automobile."

The Warner Brothers distribution plans for *The Road Warrior* seem to indicate that the movie has a good chance of making a lot of money in this country, unlike the first Mad Max film which was a huge success everywhere else but the United States. Kennedy feels that the problem with the release of his first feature in America was corporate confusion. The picture was sold to American International Pictures which was taken over by Filmways just three months before the movie was to be released. "We believe," says Kennedy "in the subsequent executive shuffle that went on, the film probably wasn't given the best opportunities it would have had, which generally seems to happen when companies change management." The Warner Brothers release pattern for *The Road Warrior,* on the other hand, which begins on May 18, is described by Kennedy as "excellent."

Now that he and Miller have established themselves as heavyweight moneymakers, many options are undoubtedly open to them. One option that Kennedy is not particularly interested in is moving his base of operations to Hollywood. Although he is interested in making Hollywood-style narrative movies, he doesn't look upon Los Angeles as necessarily the best place to make such films. "In fact," he comments, "I think the healthy thing to do is to move out of Hollywood. It's such an incestuous town; also it's not a town really run by production people.

(Continued on Page 69)

During the climactic chase, the marauders leap from their vehicles onto Max's fortified truck to finish off the ex-cop.

Fear on Film Continues! Moderated by Mick Garris.

Editor's note: Biographical sketches of the participants in this distinguished panel appeared last issue. We wish to repeat, however, that the Take One *panel discussion will soon be available as a syndicated television special. Local TV station programmers can get more details by contacting Mick Garris c/o Universal Studios, Universal City, CA.*

Mick Garris: John, can you describe your experience of the transition from film school to becoming an actual director?

John Carpenter: It's difficult. I made a film with my own money, about $60,000, and I fought my way in with it. And once it was released, I thought that all the studio heads were going to come over to my house in limousines, knock on the door, and say, "We've seen your film, we know you're great—c'mon, there's a crew waiting on the street!" But they didn't care.

John Landis: That's what happened to David . . .

David Cronenberg: Actually, in my case I thought that they would bicycle over.

Landis: Or sled.

Garris: We're going to take a look at a clip from *The Thing* right now, and then we'll talk about that when we come back . . .

Garris: We're back. . . . Let's talk about *The Thing*. What was the beginning of the whole project?

Carpenter: Universal wanted to do a remake of *The Thing*, which was filmed in 1950-51, directed by Christian Nyby, codirected by Howard Hawks, based on a short story by John Campbell called "Who Goes There?" And it was an excellent film, one of my favorite movies, with James Arness as a giant, blood-drinking carrot from outer space.

Landis: Did it scare you when you saw it for the first time?

Carpenter: It was a chair-lifter, for me. Popcorn flew. But I realized that I really couldn't remake *The Thing* from the movie; it just wouldn't work out. So we went back to the short story, which was an entirely different thing. It's more about a creature that can become you, rather than [about its ability to] kill you. Imitate you perfectly, cell for cell. So that these men in this arctic camp suddenly realize that their friends may not be their friends. And that if they don't stop it, it can become the population of the world in about two weeks—if it gets any further than this arctic camp. When it's threatened, the thing goes through several incantations and does some strange things to the human body; that's what the movie is about.

Garris: Is this project something you've been wanting to do for a while?

Carpenter: I'm really fond of it; and I'm really fond of the short story. I've always thought that it never got its due. Hawks and Nyby changed it so much from what the story was—a sort of Agatha Christie mystery up in the arctic, with people walking down dark corridors . . . I thought that might be interesting to do. It's a story more about people than it is about a monster.

Garris: Your films are generally "jump" type horror films, in a lot of respects. David, yours don't really go for jumps, but they're horrifying nonetheless in a totally different way; and they all seem to have a recurrent theme.

Cronenberg: My films tend to be very body-conscious. The body, and what it is and what it does and what it can do tends to be very central in my films. It was never a conscious thing, but I gradually realized that I was more interested in the things that happen inside you—mentally and physically—than I was in a kind of exterior threat, which is why you could legitimately say that none of my films are monster movies. To a certain extent, it's your own body that's the monster, your own existence.

Landis: There's an image in *Rabid* that's one of the most frightening things I've ever seen, when the doctor, in the middle of surgery, goes rabid and slices the nurse's finger. That scared me to death. It's such a remarkable image, that authority figure going RROAH!

Cronenberg: Good. That's exactly the thing—the idea that someone close to you might. . . . The promo for *Rabid* was "You can't trust your mother, you can't trust your neighbor, you can't trust your best friend. One minute they're normal; the next minute they're *Rabid*."

I don't mean to get very Freudian about it, but the idea that, for example, a parent wants to destroy his own child is very frightening, because a parent is supposed to do exactly the opposite. So that kind of turnaround, and the psychological reality behind it, the potentials and possibilities of that, is the

kind of horror that I'm interested in. So it's all very internal. The fact that the film called *Shivers* in Canada is called *They Came From Within* here—instead of "from outer space"—is very appropriate. That shows you the orientation I have when I make films.

Garris: All of you have done films that really have a few levels to them. Do you intentionally set out to write a film with many levels, or do you find them after the film is completed?

Landis: Both.

Cronenberg: You hope that not only are these 15 levels going, but that there are 28 other ones that you'll discover later. You want your film to be alive, which means that it's going to be complex, and means that it's also legitimate that, after release, it has a life of its own that does go beyond what you consciously planned.

I used to think that was bullshit; that people finding things and dynamics in other people's work that were not there intentionally was some kind of game. In fact, it's quite true, because I have had things pointed out to me about my films which I felt were absolutely true—and yet I didn't intend them consciously at all.

Carpenter: I've had that experience, too, a lot. I think I operate mostly unconsciously; I never start out to make a statement or put a level in, I just go at it.

Garris: In *Halloween*, for example, a lot of people found layers of morality that maybe you were and maybe you weren't intending. The good, virginal girl doesn't get killed, and everyone else gets slaughtered.

Landis: But that's the truth, Mick . . .

Cronenberg: We've all seen it happen.

Carpenter: No, that was not intended. It was a matter of convenience—the girls who were fooling around were too busy to notice what was going on.

Garris: Sex and violence is a recurrent theme in your films, David, and seems to be the major theme in *Videodrome;* can you tell us a little bit about that?

Cronenberg: How do you know what the major theme in *Videodrome* is?

Landis: Are you going to show a clip from *Videodrome*?

Cronenberg: He's going to show a clip from my script; this page right here . . .

Landis: He's going to show a paper clip. *(NOTE: Double-leveled pun.)*

Cronenberg: Well, sex and violence are very interesting—don't you think?

Garris: I couldn't agree more.

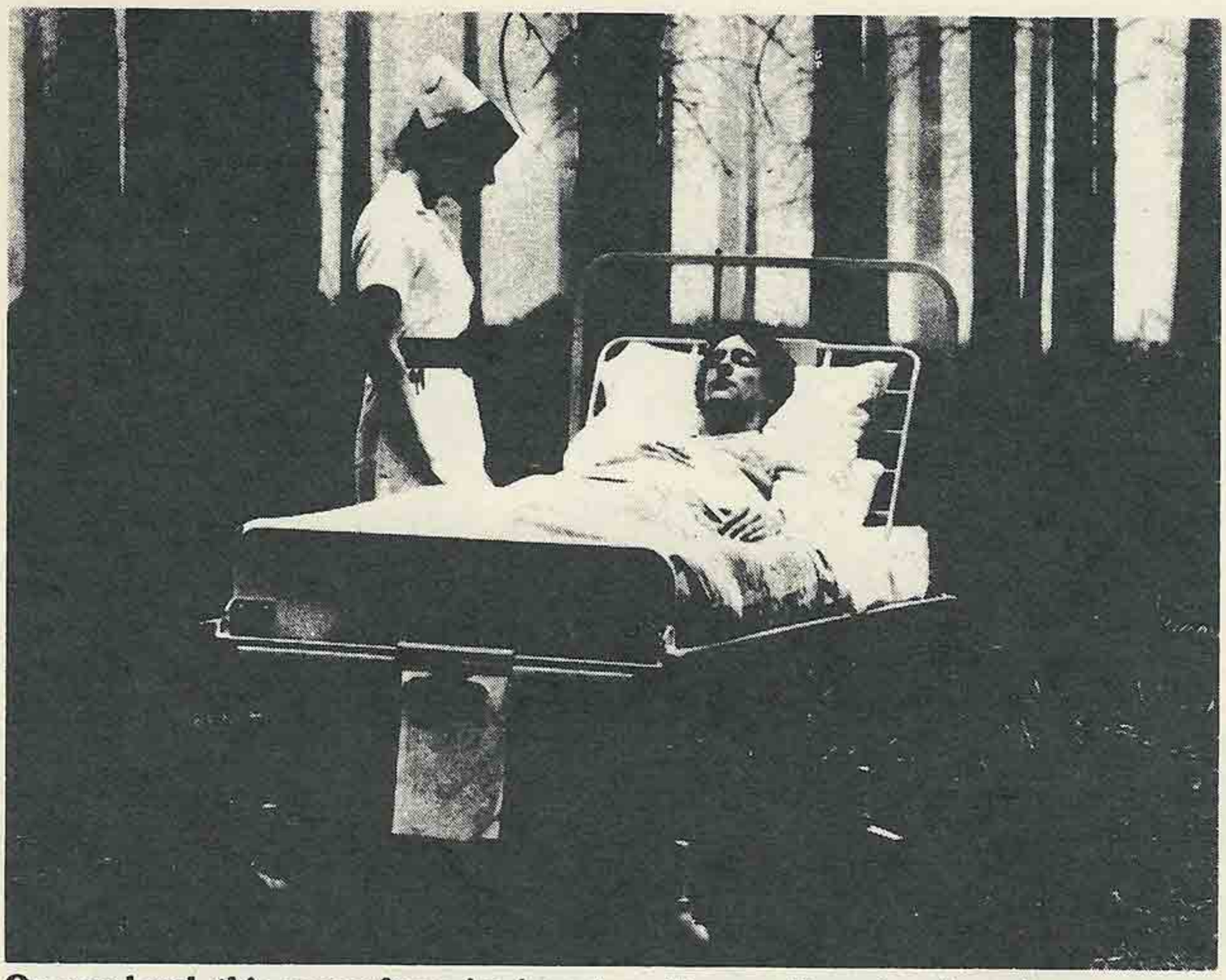
Cronenberg: Because horror films deal with really primal, basic kinds of emotion and intellect, you have to deal with sex and violence in one way or another. Even to completely leave it out of your film, one way or another, is something you don't do lightly. *Scanners* is a totally asexual film, as far as I'm concerned, and so is *The Brood,* I don't know why they happen to be—certainly *Videodrome* isn't, nor are *Shivers* and *Rabid.* But I've noticed that it's something to consider—why a particular film is asexual; there's some reason for it that has to do with the dynamics and the direction of a particular film. Also, horror films tend to deal with death a lot, and with the physical. Sex and death, and violence and death, are very naturally linked to each other.

Garris: Can you tell a little about *Videodrome?*

Cronenberg: I'm very excited about it, of course. I have no idea how it's going to be received; it's quite complex and I

ALL PHOTOS: © 1982 UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

Holy moly—it's our first-ever effects photo from *Videodrome!* Rick Baker demonstrates the Amazing Living Videocassette for an apparently delighted David Cronenberg!



On one level, this scene from *An American Werewolf* can be viewed as a scathing comment on the rising cost of hospital service.

don't think it fits into any category. It's something that I've wanted to do for a long time, in a lot of different ways.

Garris: If you were asked to give a one-sentence description of the film—

Cronenberg: The best film you'll ever see in your life. [laughter]

It's actually hard to deliver in one line, but it has to do with a man who runs a very schlocky cable TV station; he monitors video from all over the world in order to pirate free things and show them over this little station. He feels he needs to show really extreme stuff in order to attract an audience, because he can't compete with the networks and so on. He discovers a very strange show called *Videodrome*, which seems to be nothing but torture and murder, and seems very realistic. He becomes very obsessed with the show, and begins to delve into it further and further—and then it starts to get very strange, after that.

Garris: Well, let's look at a clip from that . . .

Landis: Can I ask David a question?

Garris: Sure. [To *Take One* crew:] We'll start with Landis . . .

Landis: You guys are known as masters of horror, and fantasy film; I've always made comedies—really only made two monster movies. I've noticed that, in Hollywood anyway, I'm always given every comedy script that comes along. Since *Werewolf*, I also get a lot of monster movie scripts; now I can do comedies and monster movies. You, John, have done a lot of things other than horror films—*Elvis, Assault on Precinct 13*. How do you see yourselves, as filmmakers?

Cronenberg: I did do a movie about drag racing called *Fast Company;* nobody wants to talk about it. Not that it was bad, but it got really sporadic release. But I really loved doing it. It was my version of a Western; there was a shoot-out on the dragstrip in it. It had a lot of my interest in cars and machinery in it, that you don't see in my other films. There are a lot of things that I'm obsessed with and fascinated by that have not, yet, really been involved. The films that I make just seem to exclude certain things. But I do get offered a lot of horror scripts, there's no question about that.

Carpenter: I see myself as just a director. I really want to do Westerns—those are my favorite. I could throw away all of these suspense films and just do Westerns the rest of my life.

Landis: *Assault on Precinct 13* was a Western.

Carpenter: Sure.

Garris: What kind of filmmaker do you consider yourself?

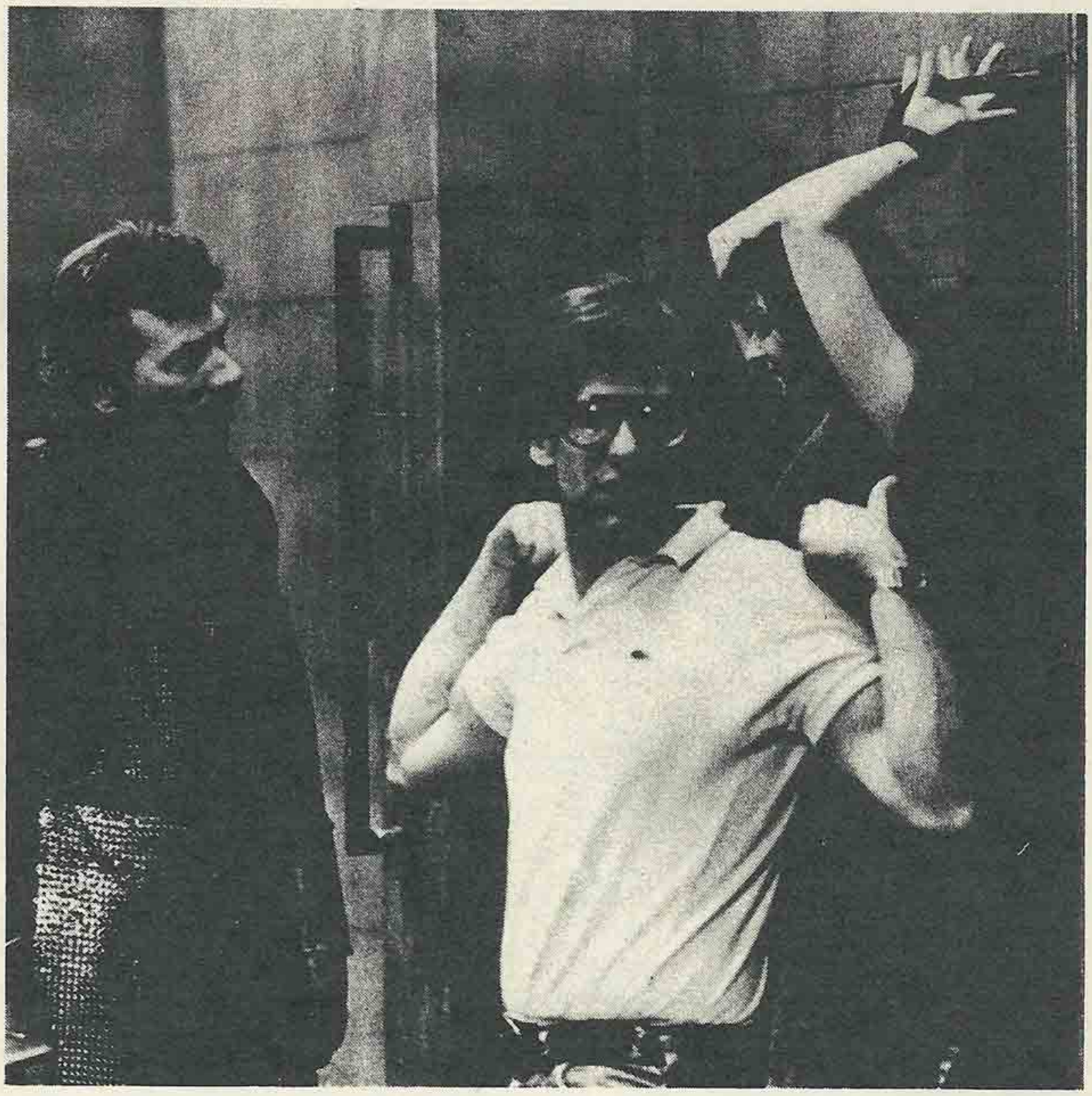
Landis: The same thing. I always resented being "Mr. Comedy." Now instead of "Mr. Comedy," it's "Mr. Monster"—it's so bizarre!

Garris: You wrote *American Werewolf* back when you were 19 years old; what was the reaction of people when you gave them the script?

Landis: Kaka, phooey, get out!

Cronenberg: Don't swear . . .

Landis: *Werewolf* was unusual—it was a strange script; the intention was to treat a supernatural subject, and therefore basically absurd subject, totally straight . . . the idea was, if a very good friend of yours was to call you up and say, "I have a serious problem. We must talk," and you go and meet him at a restaurant and he sits across from you and says, "Listen, this is serious. Last night I turned into a wolf, I killed six



Cronenberg sets up a shot in *Videodrome*'s notorious torture room.

people by tearing out their throats," what would your response be?

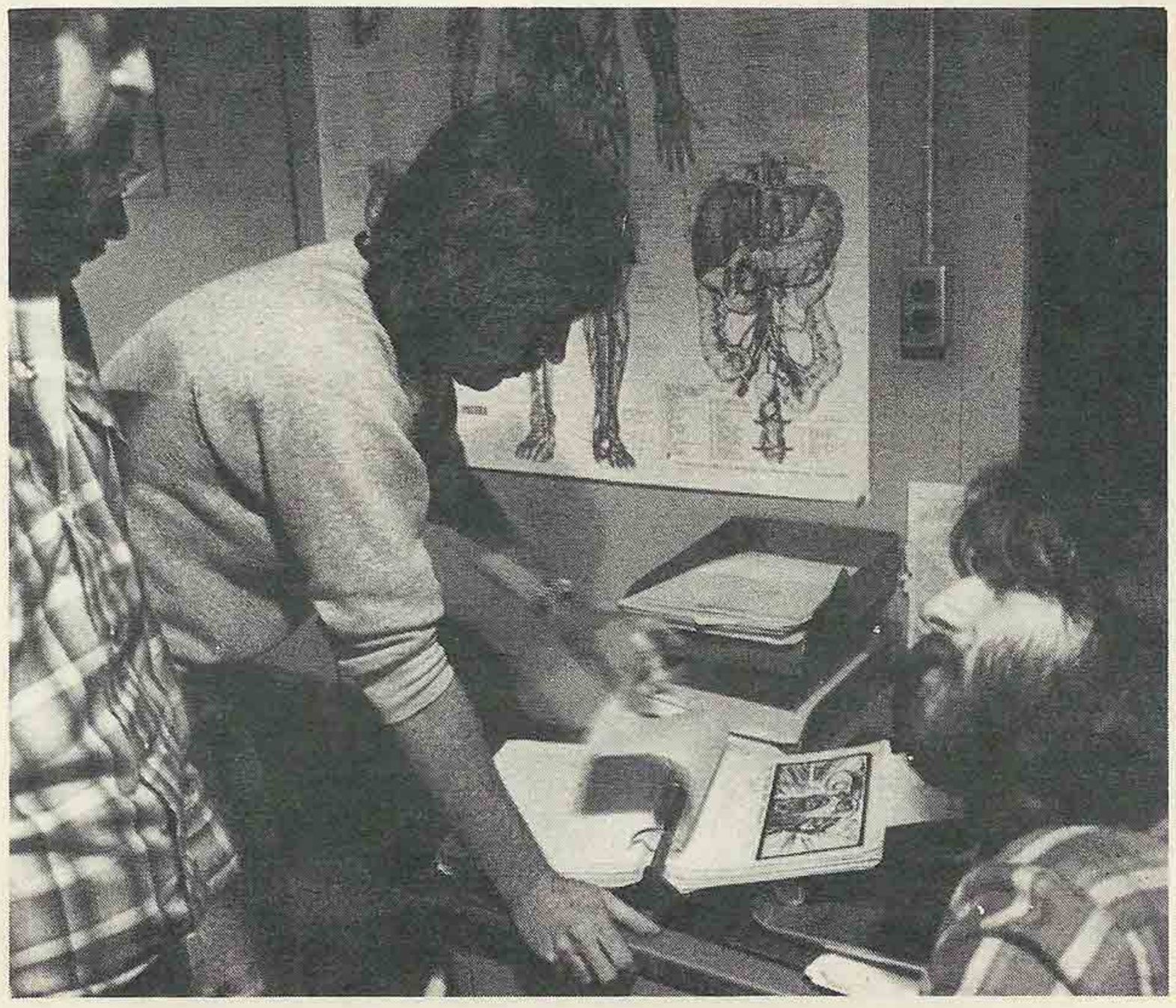
Cronenberg: Well . . . do you want to know what happened when my brother . . . [laughter]

Landis: You make a joke right now! We dismiss it; the intention behind it was to treat it straight, and that's why it became funny. If you see the movie, none of the killing is funny—the horror is straight, and pretty horrific. But the people's responses to the events are funny.

Years ago, someone was telling me about *Rabid,* this great movie they saw on a triple bill at the World Theater—this terrific, great movie called *Rabid.* I said, well, what's it about? "Well, Marilyn Chambers is kind of a vampire and a worm comes out of her underarm." And I went, "What!?!" I thought it was hysterical, I had to see it. And the movie scared me to death. The idea, when someone puts it, "This full moon you're going to turn into a beast and eat people," it's . . . . . dumb!

Carpenter: John, I think horror films are real close to comedy. For instance, I always thought David's films are really funny. I thought *Rabid* was almost a comedy; I thought *They Came From Within* was a comedy—I was just laughin' my head off at it. So, I think, it's really close. It's like something that Kubrick said about making *Dr. Strangelove*—"the more serious it got, the funnier it got." The grimmer it gets, the more ridiculous; like you said, your best friend comes up and says I'm a werewolf and I killed these guys; it's ridiculous; it's too grim!

Landis: Hitchcock told me that *Psycho* was a comedy; and he was quite genuinely dismayed that it was not perceived as such. And it is, on second viewing, when Norman says things like, "My mother's not herself today," or "I like to clean up . . ."



Cundey, Carpenter and Bottin study Mike Ploog's storyboards in preparation for an effects sequence for *The Thing*.

Garris: In your films, David, the four that have been released in the states so far, the first two are hilarious, and then very serious, for *The Brood* and *Scanners* . . .

Cronenberg: Yes, well it's what I was saying about sexuality. I noticed that *The Brood* wasn't very funny, and *Scanners* was not funny in the way that *Rabid* was. But there wasn't anything I could do about it; it just seemed that that was what it wanted to be. And it's always true that when you make a film of any inventiveness, you always walk a thin line, risking it going absurd on you in a bad way, and losing it. It's much safer to do a soap opera, in some ways, because it's at least familiar stuff. Here you are inventing something. As for why they're not funny, I guess I just wasn't feeling very funny at the time.

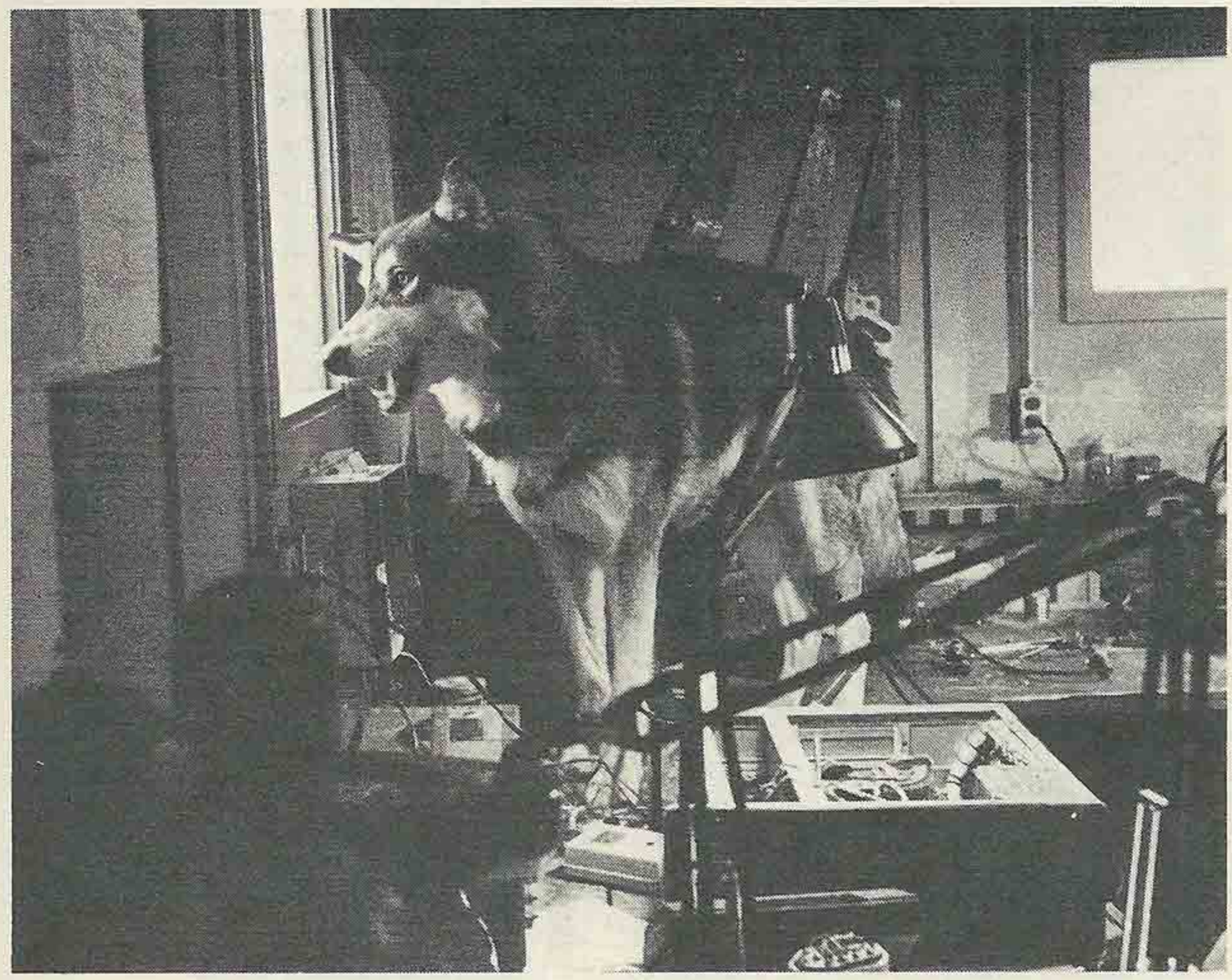
I knew *Rabid* was funny, it's not that it was unintentional. It was nice with *Rabid* and *They Came From Within* to say, OK, let's see if I can have it both ways, funny and genuinely scary at the same time. It's the same juggling act that John was dealing with in *Werewolf,* a very difficult trick to pull off. And with *The Brood,* I wasn't particularly interested in doing that juggling act—I did a couple of other things instead.

Landis: Also, laughter is almost always a response to fear. When you saw *The Exorcist,* there was always a lot of laughter in the theater—nervous laughter.

Carpenter: But you know there are all kinds of humor, and black humor is one thing. The kind of laugh you're talking about is not the same. Nervous laughter is quite different.

Garris: All of you have dealt in special effects very heavily, especially recently, to achieve some of your horrific moments. Let's take a look at the transformation scene from *An American Werewolf in London,* right now . . .

NEXT: The terrifying triumvirate on the mixed blessings of FX makeup; and on fear vs. repulsion.



By popular demand, we present once again the mechanical dog from *The Thing*.

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Horror Invades The Soaps

Makeup Artist Kevin Haney Gets To Show His Stuff on Texas

By David Everitt

On January 15, soap opera history was made. On that day NBC's daytime serial *Texas* moved away from such petty difficulties as infidelity, treachery and unwanted pregnancies, and took on something *really* important: bodily disintegration. With the help of Dick Smith's makeup protege Kevin Haney, *Texas'* "unregenerate Beau Baker" came to a supernatural end and then had the decency to mummify and shrivel up before he could be buried.

The unusual plot development is described by Haney: "There's a thing called a fire compass and it looks like sort of an Aztec version of the Rubik's Cube. This guy Beau Baker gets ahold of it and figures out how to open it. He pulls out one of the pieces which is enveloped in this reddish gas that instantly kills him. So he's dead in his wife's room and his wife thinks she's going to be accused of murdering him so she decides to get rid of the body with her friend. While they're dumping the body, strange things start happening to Baker." Once these strange things get started, Haney's considerable makeup skills come to the fore.

For the initial stage, when Beau Baker seems to be just another dead man, Haney made actor Robert Burton very pale and hollowed in the man's cheeks and eye sockets. A layer of K-Y jelly then made him "nice and waxy." Haney says the second stage was "put together at the last minute. It involved foam latex pieces across the cheeks and neck to start the deterioration process. Then we went to prosthetics over the full face. The final stage was a dummy made out of polyester resin, with articulate latex hands." The limited budget for the program overruled any possibility of on-screen transformations so that the disintegration stages were separated by cutaways. "The prosthetic makeup I used for these scenes," says Haney, "is the same technique employed in every sophisticated horror or science fiction genre today, but rarely on daytime television because it is such a lengthy process. Normally, this process takes around two months, but I had only three weeks."

PHOTOS: © 1982 NBC-TV

Perhaps Haney's best known effort has been for one of Steve Martin's most serious roles as "The Elephant Guy". Broadcast live, the makeup had to be applied during a commercial break.

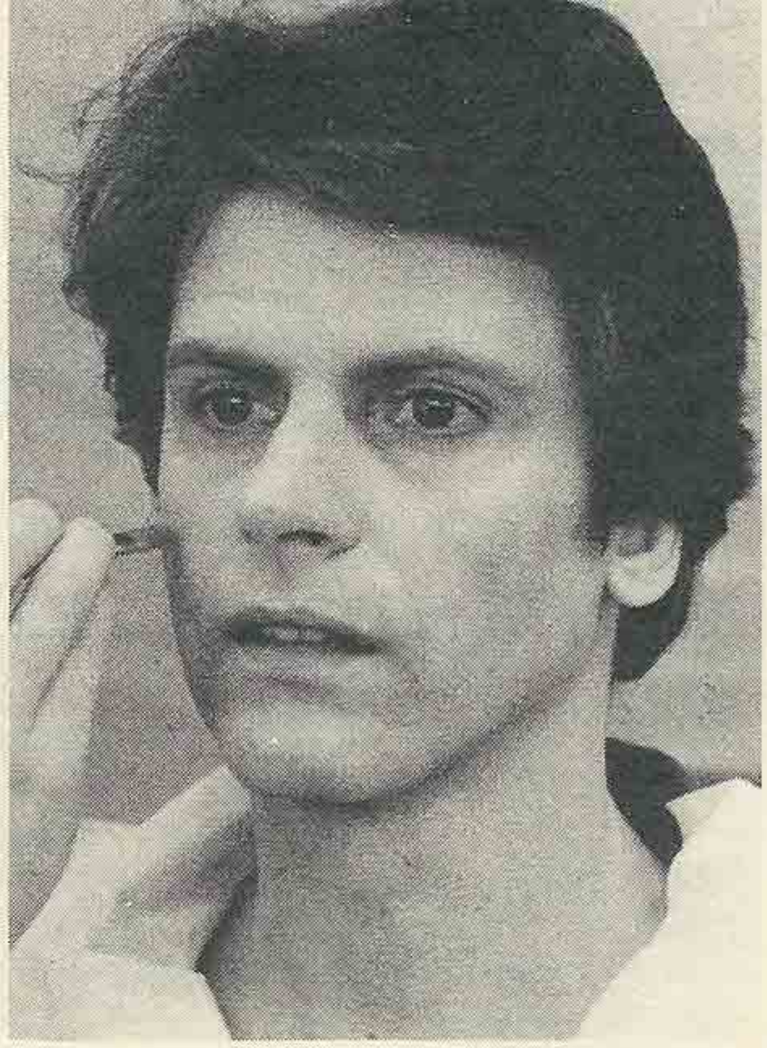
Although Beau Baker is dead and actor Robert Burton has moved on to other things, the grisly consequences of the character's weird demise were slow to leave the program entirely. An NBC press release states that the dummy of Baker's shriveled corpse was to make sporadic appearances for several weeks, following Burton's exit, in the form of nightmare visions. Fans of both soap operas and horror from the 60's will recall that another daytime serial, *Dark Shadows* (see FANGO #17), made the transition from a gothic romance to a full-blown horror show after producer Dan Curtis introduced a vampire into the proceedings to boost the program's faltering ratings. Will

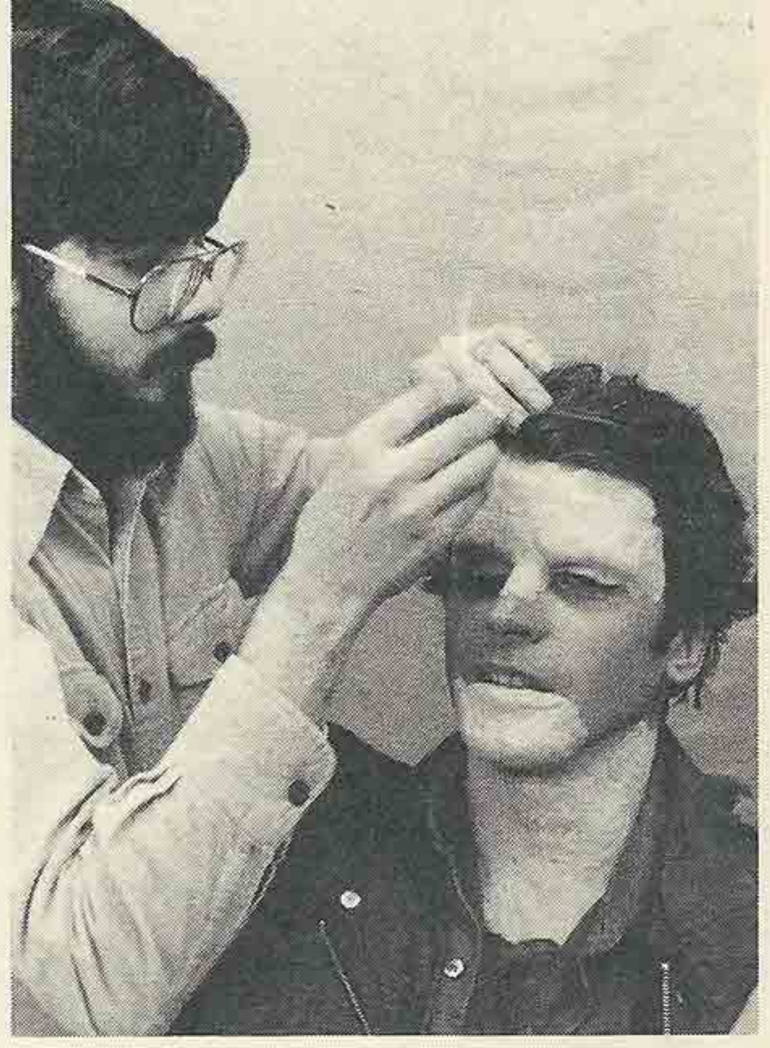
Texas now become the *Dark Shadows* of the Southwest? *Dark Saddles,* perhaps? Be sure to stay tuned in to NBC on weekdays at three o'clock to find out. If anything interesting comes up, let us know. We've got better things to do at three o'clock.

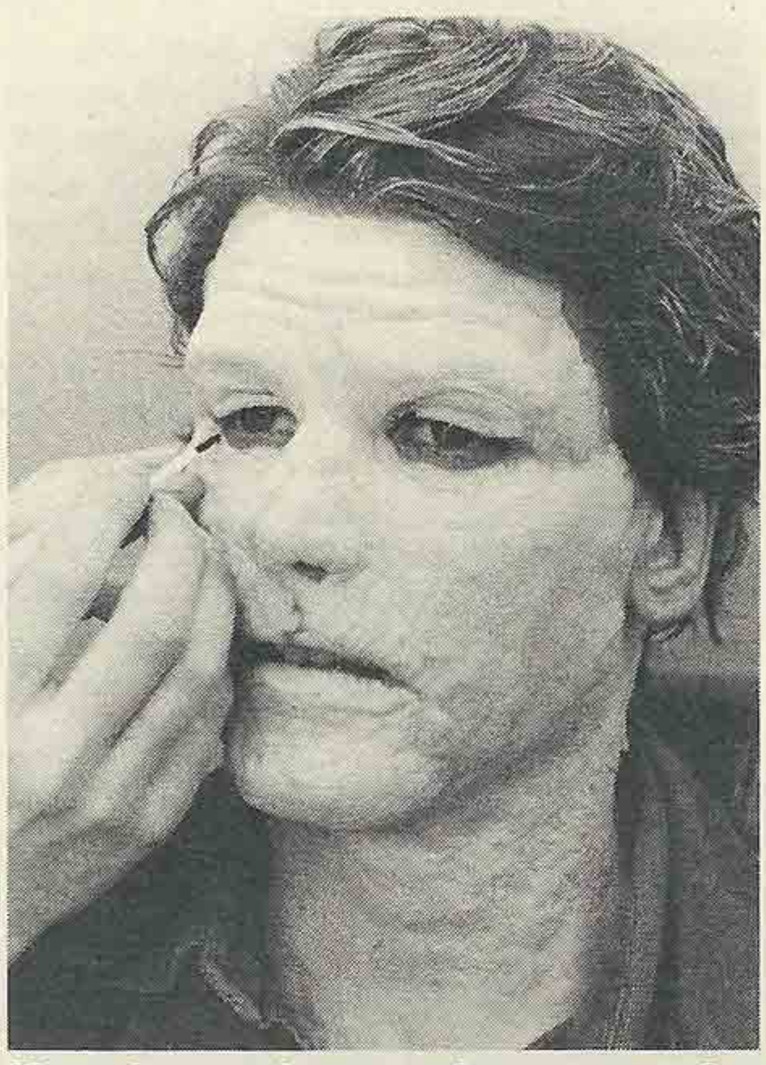
Now a staff makeup artist whose work has been seen on Steve Martin's "Elephant Guy" sketch, Kevin Haney was assisted in his career by the great Dick Smith. Haney was working in a McDonald's in Ohio when he first sent some photographs of his makeup work to Smith. His samples included college theater work and some Indian makeups he had done for an outdoor drama called *Tecumseh,* "which was basically two steps up from university theater." Haney remembers very clearly the night Dick Smith called. "It was a Friday night. The voice on the other end said, 'Hello, this is Dick Smith from New York.' So I picked myself up off the floor, and he said, 'I just got your work and I want to say I'm very impressed and I just had to call you.' It was just like a dream come true. I was around four feet off the ground for two days." After this first phone call, a correspondence started and when Smith needed a lab assistant to help him on *Altered States* he called on Haney.

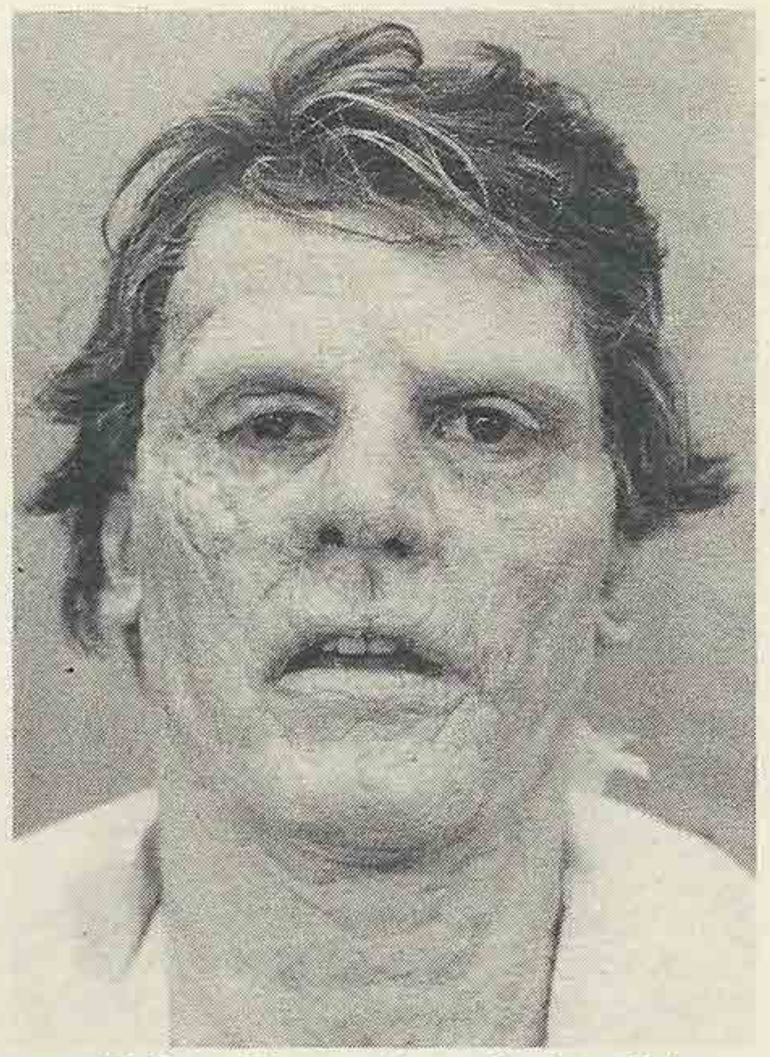
When asked what he learned from Smith on this film, Haney says that, since everyone including Smith had to learn new techniques for *Altered States,* his most important lesson had to do with the makeup master's attitude. "That's one of the biggest things that impressed me about Dick. He was constantly learning and progressing. He is constantly seeking out new materials or finding new processes. That was probably the biggest contribution he made to me. It was really his overall approach to makeup."

Other assignments for Haney have been *Wolfen* (working with Carl Fullerton) and the highly touted (by FANGORIA) feature by Frank Henenlotter and Edgar Ievans, *Basket Case.* One of his most off-the-wall jobs was a censored creature made for *Saturday Night Live.* In a post-holocaust skit by Michael O'Donoghue called "The Psychos", Haney supplied something that O'Donoghue termed a "blow-hole". Haney describes this thing as a Gigeresque orifice with a slimy appearance that looks like the inside of a tongue and that might also be viewed as something vaginal in appearance. He also describes this creation as "disgusting," an opinion apparently shared by TV Broadcast Standards and Practices which cut the blow-hole out of the show. Hopefully, the censorship of Haney's work will not become a regular practice. If producers, both in TV and film, have any sense at all, Haney's makeup will be seen an awful lot in years to come.

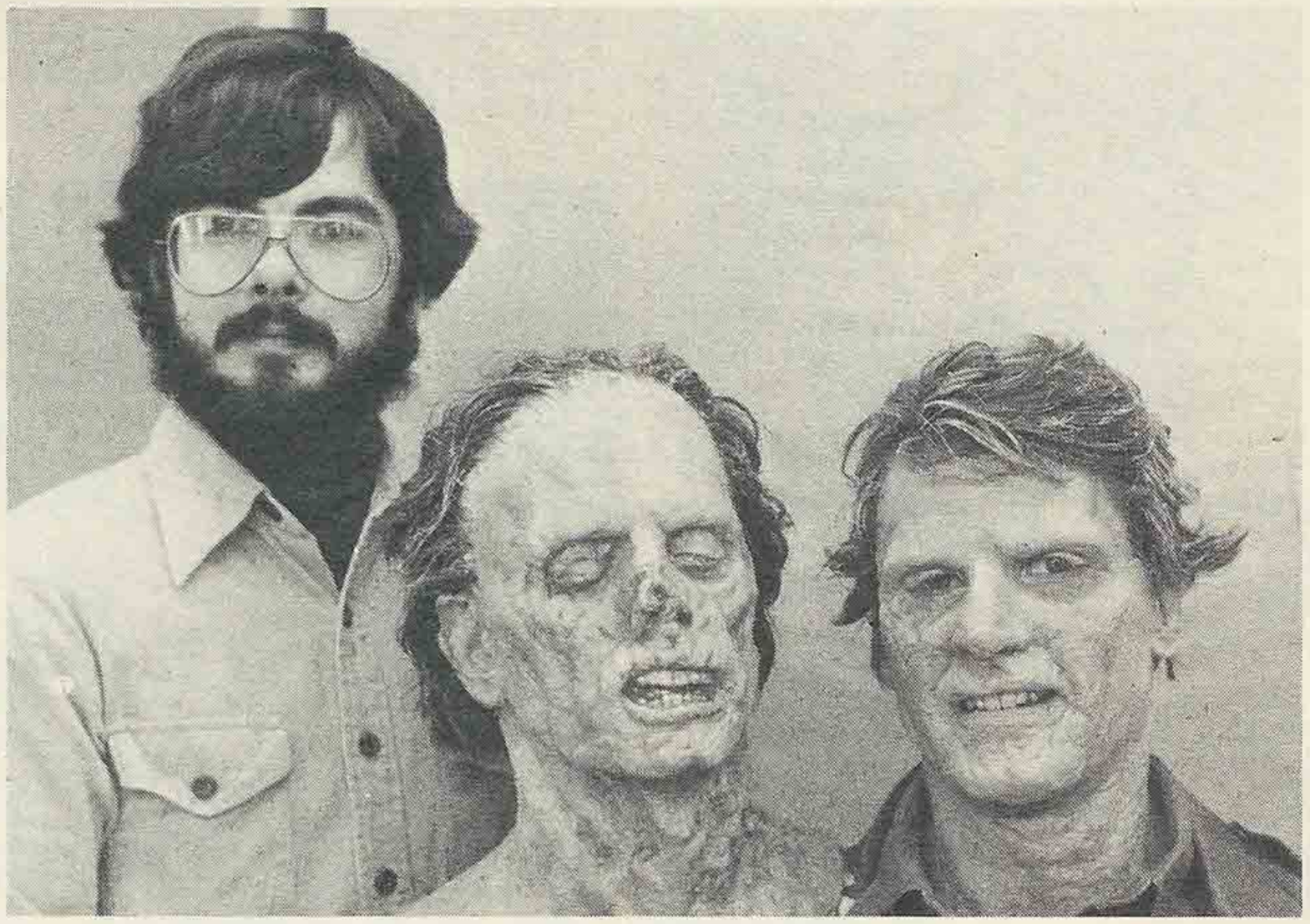








Haney's prosthetic appliances transform actor Robert Burton into the horribly shriveled, and not to mention dead, Beau Baker.



Makeup artist, dummy and actor get together for a parting shot.

Doug White and Makeup Effects Lab

The Makeup Effects Artist for Friday the 13th Part III—In 3D *Talks About Creating Jason's Bloody Exploits and his Career in the Effects Field.*

By David Everitt

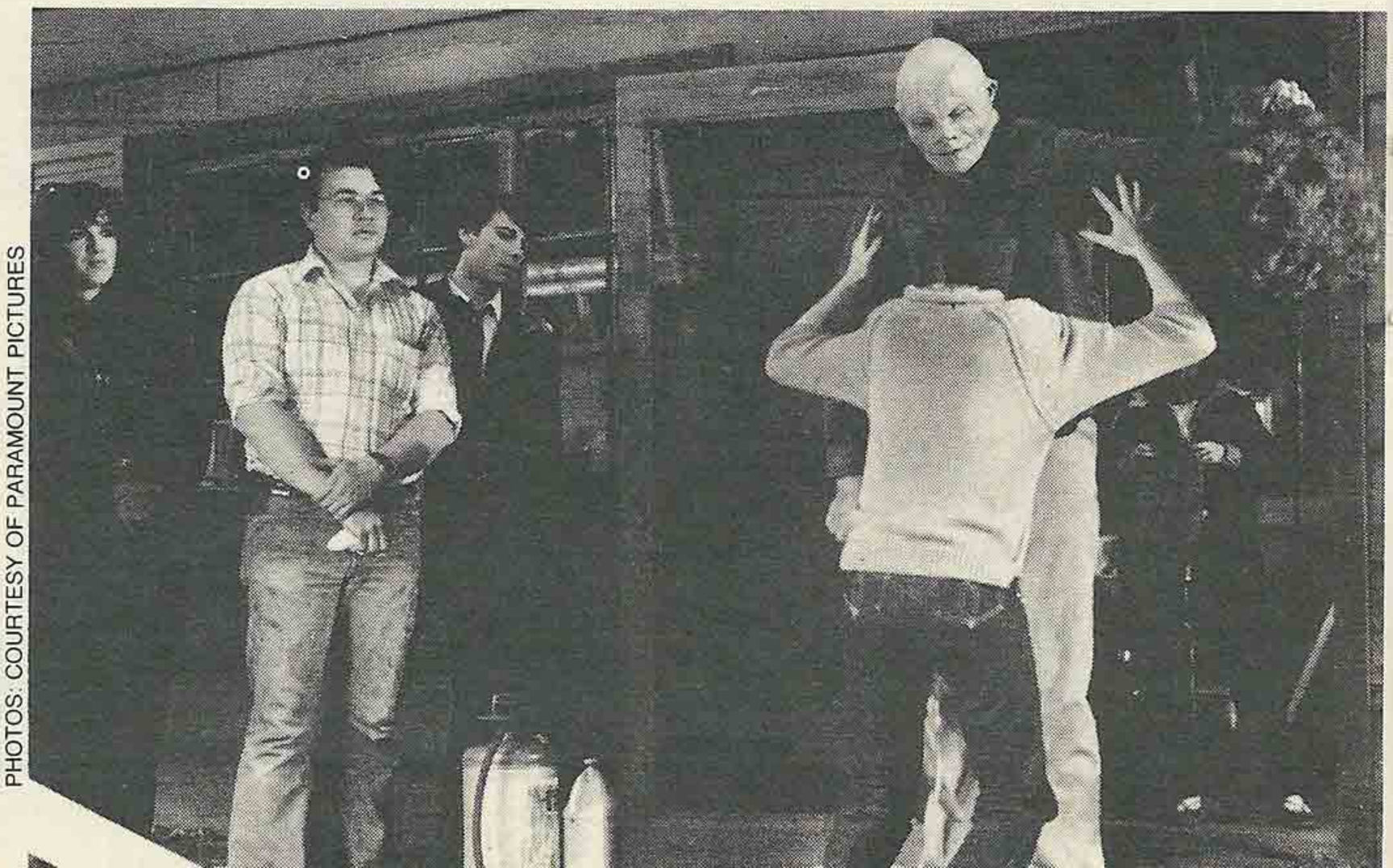
The *Friday the 13th* movies elicit strong reactions from both their offended critics and their devoted fans, but the one thing that most people will agree upon is that these box-office-champ splatter pictures require considerable special makeup expertise to shoot the notorious slaughter scenes that are the trademark of the series. For the latest entry, *Friday the 13th Part III—In 3D,* Doug White and his Makeup Effects Lab follow in the gruesome footsteps of Tom Savini and Carl Fullerton to bring gore fans more of the authentic-looking carnage that they crave.

Doug White founded Makeup Effects Lab in North Hollywood with his partners Allan Apone and Peter Knowlton about three years ago. Since that time, Frank Carrisosa replaced Knowlton as the third partner, and the company has taken on many movie assignments that include such pictures as *Evilspeak, The Sword and the Sorcerer* and *Parasite.* The outfit is actually made up of three companies: Fantasy Creations, which deals with props, miniatures and related special effects; Makeup Effects Products, through which the three partners sell their own makeup products to distributors; and the special makeup division, Makeup Effects Lab. With a wide range of skills at his disposal, White finds that he lands straight special effects jobs that may involve breaking through doors or shattering panes of glass (as was the case with *Parasite*) just as often as he hires himself out for pure makeup tasks (as he and his partners did on *Evilspeak*). In some cases, as on *The Sword and the Sorcerer,* White's versatile company may be called upon to engineer both special makeup *and* physical effects.

White has been developing his array of talents on a professional basis since 1972. For two-and-a-half years he worked as an assistant to makeup man Byrd Holland on commercials, several episodes of TV's *In Concert* series, and such little-remembered independent features as *Terror Circus.* Holland then introduced White to Joe Blasco (see FANGORIA numbers 20 and 21) with whom the young makeup artist worked on the infamous *Ilse, She-Wolf of the S.S.* During this early period of his career, White says "most of my work was heavy character makeup or facial buildup. At that time I was not really doing any appliances. When I was working with Byrd I was dealing more with character makeup, really just doing stuff out of my case, whereas when I worked with Joe, when we did *She-Wolf,* we did gelatin buildups on the face. Joe had a special technique for buildups using gelatin which was really interesting. I learned a lot."

Following his stint with Blasco, White took a hiatus from the movie business to work some things out for himself. "At the time," recalls White, "I wasn't really familiar with all the people in the business. I figured my contacts were with Byrd and Joe. I went without work for almost two months after *She-Wolf;* I needed to make some money and nothing was happening with either Byrd or Joe right then. Had I kept in contact with Joe, I might've been able to go up with him to do *They Came From Within* with Cronenberg. As it was, I just needed to get myself straightened out, to settle down, and be in a position where, if something came up, I could do it. And it took

Left : Allen Apone prepares the special makeup head gear for a decapitation scene. Below: Doug White (with glasses) and producer Frank Mancuso, Jr. look on as the gear is put to use by the murderous Jason.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES

three-and-a-half, four years to do that."

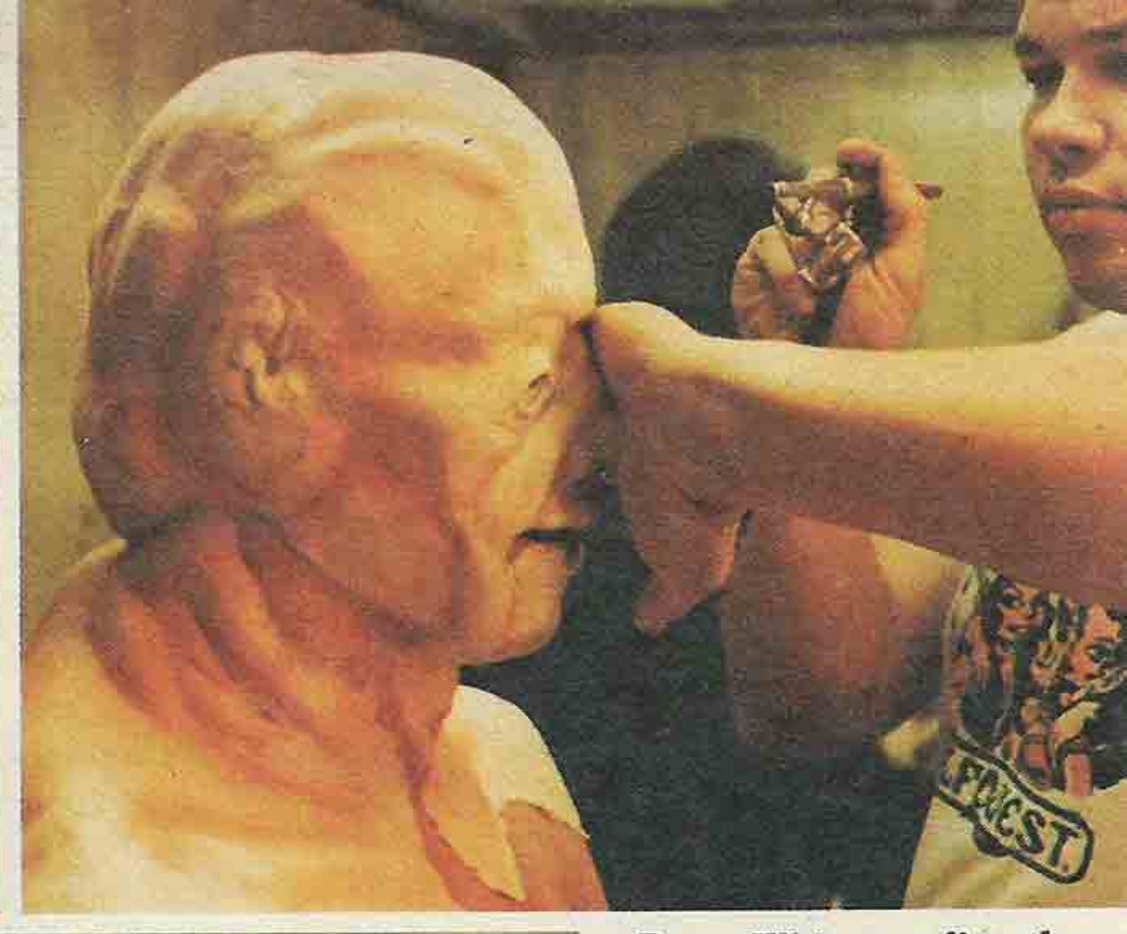
White kept his hand in the business during this period with an occasional production job while ostensibly working full-time for a pipe and tobacco company. White remembers, "I was the sickest person working there, due to the fact that I was always calling in sick in order to do a movie or something. I would do a commercial for two days and come back, until the next job."

An important development in White's career occurred when he and his future partner Allan Apone worked with Tom Burman in 1979 on John Frankenheimer's *Prophecy*. Through his association with Burman, White met Stan Winston and assisted him both on his unrealized *Overlords* project and on the Wookies for the holiday *Star Wars* TV special. Another result of White's working friendship with Burman was the inspiration to strike out on his own. He and Apone were so impressed by Burman's independent makeup studio set-up that they decided they should establish a studio of their own. By the middle of 1979 this ambition began to be realized.

Friday the 13th Part III—In 3D may be the most prominent display for Make-up Effects Lab's technical expertise. *Friday the 13th* films are never short on grisly murders and each one requires some extreme makeup effects. For *Friday the 13th Part III,* victims get cleavers in the head, knitting needles through the back of the head and out through the mouth, spears through the eye, red hot pokers through the torso, and machetes through the entire body. For the especially bloodthirsty, there is also a scene of a young man getting the side of his head crushed and his eyeball popped out. Certainly enough to keep any makeup effects team busy, and any viewer either miserably or ecstatically nauseous.

Some of the most gruesome sequences were trimmed by the makers of the picture to avoid difficulties with the MPAA further down the road. Recalling problems with the first sequel, the hot poker and the spear scenes were cut to make them somewhat less graphic. In the latter scene, one of the most dramatic 3D bits in the picture, the unstoppable Jason fires a spear gun some 100 to 150 feet away from the camera and the viewer can see the spear coming at him for the entire distance. The spear then lodges itself in Vera's eye. According to White, "They did a side shot of her taking a reaction upon impact and falling back into the water, and then they cut to her turning sideways with the tip of the spear coming toward the camera for the 3D effect. But they cut out the reaction because they said it looked too good." As a result of this and similar cuts, once the picture was delivered to the MPAA, director Steven Miner only had to go back to the editing bench once as opposed to the eight cuts required by the ratings board on *Friday the 13th Part II*.

In one of the most horrifying scenes in *Friday the 13th Part III,* a character named Andy walks down a hallway on his hands and Jason sneaks up behind him with a machete and chops him in half. White and his crew planned on some elaborate devices for this murder but they didn't quite pan out. White explains, "We wanted to make an entirely mechanical doll of Andy but it didn't turn out that way. Instead, we made a foam dummy that was suspended from the ceiling and it was already split in half and held together by velcro. Marty Becker [the special effects man] had the wires going up to the ceiling to a quick disconnect device. From there he just activated it when the machete came through and the de-



Doug White applies the extensive makeup that transforms Richard Brooker into Jason the slaughter-master, the third makeup version of this mainstay of the *Friday the 13th* series. Left: Jason improves his mind with some first-rate reading.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DOUG WHITE

Above: The Makeup Effects Lab's rendition of Mrs. Voorhees.Above Right: Apone works on the puppet head for the notorious eye-popping sequence. Right: The Makeup Effects Lab partners beside one of their creations for *Evilspeak*. From left to right, Frank Carrisosa, Allan Apone and Doug White.

vice released the legs first and then the hips."

The most challenging killing for White and company to engineer was the scene of the young man getting his head crushed, followed immediately by the victim's eye popping out and flying toward the camera in 3D. White's first thoughts on the eyeball action was to fire it out of the false head with compressed air, but there was no way to control the eye so that it would fly directly toward the camera. White's second idea was to put the eye on the end of a rod which ran through the back of the head. The head blocked the manipulation of the rod from the camera's view, but the double right-left view of the 3D system would have revealed the rod. "The third way," explains White, "which was the way we finally did it in the show, was that we had a monofilament wire, attached to the side of the head to a sheet of clear plastic with a hole drilled through the center which was between the two lenses. You'll never see the wire. Then they had a jerk-line which traveled up the same wire, through the eyeball and the socket. When they go through Jason's motions of crushing the head, the puppet head's mouth opens screaming, and on the right cue I pulled the lever for the head to collapse. The head was designed in such a way out of fiberglass that it looked like a jigsaw puzzle from the inside, so that when I pulled the lever the entire side of the head collapsed and Marty pulled the eye out of the socket at the same time."

This spectacular scene of violence is one of the two things in *Friday the 13th Part III* that White is particularly pleased with. The other task was the creation of the killer Jason's makeup, a job that was completed within some tight time limitations. White says, "We'd already been working on the show for almost 10 weeks when they came up to me to do the makeup for Jason. I had to create Jason's makeup in a week. I sculpted the prototype in a day, got the OK the next day, did my touch-ups on the sculpture, then cut it up for the making of appliances. After that we did the first makeup, then Steve mentioned he wanted to change some of the appliances. I didn't have to change the entire look of it, just some of the pieces, so I did those changes the next week."

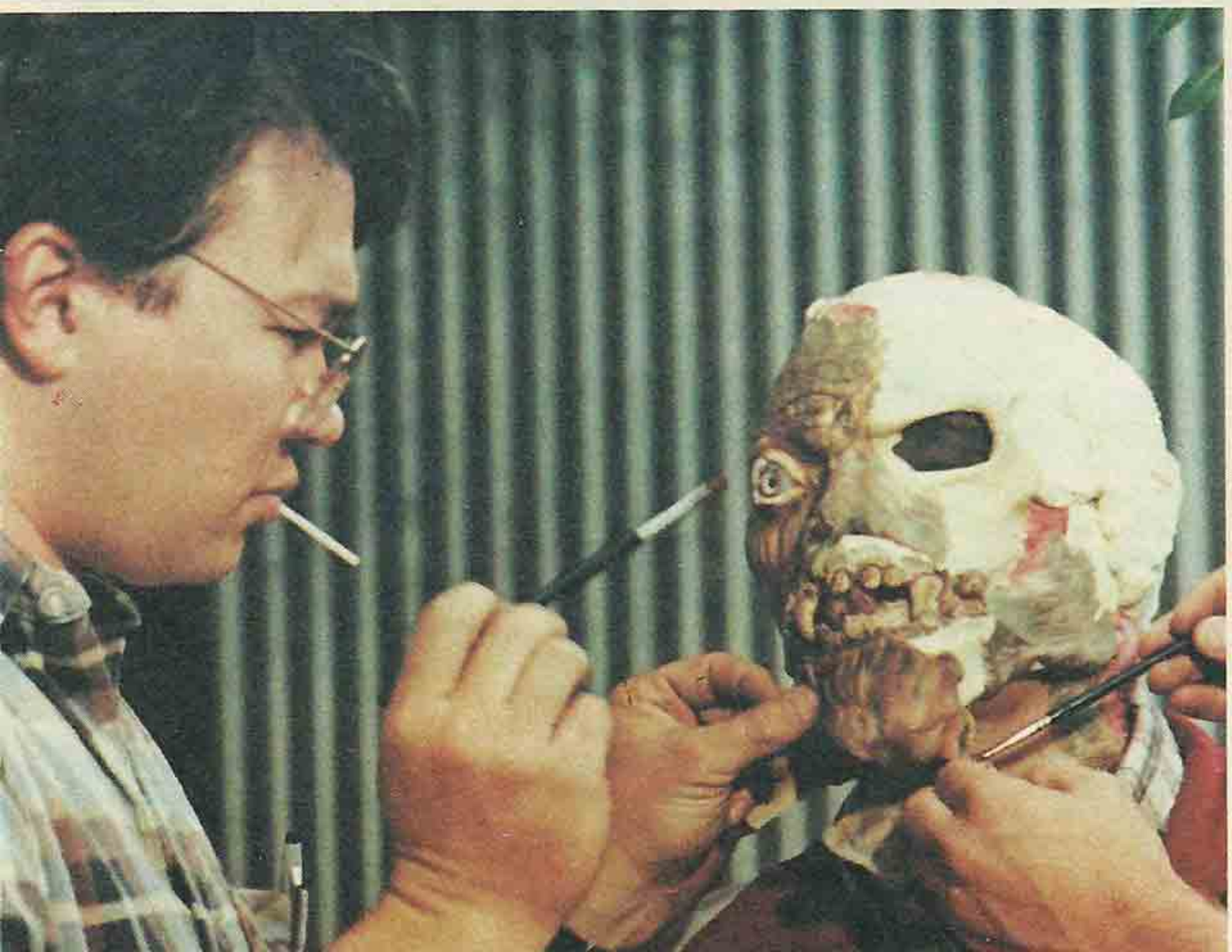
For the third time in as many movies, Jason was given a new grotesque look. White explains that the original idea for *Friday the 13th Part III* was to make the new Jason makeup a conglomeration of the first two incarnations. "Steven liked a little of both of them," he says. "He wanted to lean a little more to the Tom Savini version, but I took a little bit of both the Tom Savini and Carl Fullerton Jasons to come up with the new look. Steve didn't want me to lean that much to the look Carl had gotten, which was before *Elephant Man*. He wanted more

of a mutated look."

Now that he has a definitive slaughter picture under his belt, is White satisfied with creating gore effects? "Boy, I've been doing them ever since I got started," replies the makeup man. "And even before then I was always interested with that aspect of makeup. But I do like a change every once in a while, doing a fantasy makeup or two, creating some aliens or what-not. Gore effects happen to be our cup of tea for the moment, that's what we usually get paid to do."

Some interesting projects involving Makeup Effects Lab will be in release in the near future. Allan Apone has just finished a picture called *The Rats* that was filmed in Toronto. White points out, "It's a show with an unusual cast of 40 dachsunds playing 40 rats. Here in the lab we created the designs for 40 rat costumes for the dogs, and they also have about 26 hand puppets and two mechanical insert heads which are double the usual size for closeup work. That one's due out for Halloween." Other upcoming projects will be *X-Ray* with Barbi Benton, and *Butcher, Baker, Nightmare Maker* (see Monster Invasions, FANGORIA #17). An especially intriguing picture is a 12-minute film called "Demon Shock" which is designed to be shown in a 180-degree format for showings at amusement parks. "They shoot the entire film through a fish-eye lens," White says, "which makes it distorted if you look at the film, but it is then projected through a fish-eye lens onto a domed ceiling; it's got this wraparound look. There's some extensive makeup in there, non-stop appliance work. The main actor in the film wears a special makeup; they begin the show with a girl going through the graveyard and he comes out of the grave as a corpse; half his face is a skull and the other half is decomposed flesh. As he goes through the show, the next stage is just the eyes in the sockets with the skull and no skin, and then there's no eyes in the sockets at all. He wears anywhere between 12 and 20 appliance pieces everytime we made him up. There are a total of 16 or 17 theaters in the United States with this 180-degree format in amusement parks and there are another 200 or so across Europe. The producers probably won't have the film totally booked until the beginning of next year."

When he is not creating bloody makeup effects, White's versatility allows him to do other things, such as straight physical effects, which he has done recently on Charles Band's upcoming picture *The Alchemist*. He feels that "makeup effects bridges all the gaps. Either you're doing straight makeup or you're doing mechanical makeup effects or you're doing straight mechanical effects. I'm one of those types of people who just don't want to stay in one spot. I like the idea of being versatile. I enjoy the entire field of effects work. I'm not going to pigeonhole myself."



Behind the scenes of the 180-degree-format picture "Demon Shock". Above left: Michael Mills applies cannibal-monster head onto Doug White. Below left: White works on ghoul makeup for actor Ray Lietkin. Above: Teres Nickols checks the ghoul costume.

DR. CYCLOPS Extra

Mal Arnold stars as Fuad Ramses—madman and Egyptian caterer, hired to prepare a heathen feast for the party of a young

Miami Beach socialite (Playmate Connie Mason). Says H.G. Lewis, "I've often compared it with Walt Whitman's poetry—it's no good, but it's the first."

BLOOD FEAST: (Wizard Video) John Carpenter says it's the only movie that ever offended him. The esteemed monster magazine of the 60's *Castle of Frankenstein* unkindly reviewed it as "amateur night at the butcher shop" 15 years ago. John Stanley's *Creature Features* movie guide lists all of H.G. Lewis' gore films, and treats them all as subhuman endeavors.

I'll leave it to the pictures on this page to tell you about the story, the effects and the production values of *Blood Feast*, the granddaddy of all slaughter epics. The question I'd like to raise is, *why does everyone miss the point?!?*

The greatest attraction of *Blood Feast* is, of course, its effects. "Amateur night at the butcher shop" is one way to look at it; in fact, the gore in this film is as stylized as the violence in a *Tom and Jerry* cartoon. Where most directors try to get you to believe that what is happening in a film is real, Lewis incorporates an outrageousness factor that defies all belief; when Fuad Ramses extricates a foot-long tongue from the mouth of a victim, it's the fact that you *can't* believe it that makes it entertaining.

In the last year, there have been a dozen attempts to parody slaughter movies—and none of them have had half the humor of the first slaughter film itself. It's clear that Lewis was fully aware of the sheer absurdity of slaughter-film-as-entertainment when he filmed *Blood Feast*, and he made that absurdity his ally.

I'm sure Carpenter did not mean to be unkind by calling *Blood Feast* offensive; but perhaps the greatest absurdity is that Lewis never saw any huge profit from the genre that he pioneered (and ruthlessly exploited)—except the knowledge that, without the extreme precedents set by his films, many of the more "tasteful" slaughter films might never have been made.

Dick Smith

First of two parts—an in-depth conversation with the Living Master of Special Makeup Effects—

By DAVID EVERITT

Rows of shelves in Dick Smith's tasteful Westchester home are filled with small busts sculpted by the makeup artist during the long hours spent waiting between takes on movie sets over the course of his 35-year career. These many well-crafted statuettes speak not only of Smith's great artistic skills but also of the vast array of movie assignments he has undertaken and the great gaps of time he has had to while away when in production. But there are fewer additions from recent years; he no longer has to take every assignment that comes his way, only the ones that meet his standards, and he can now do most of his work at home, away from the tedium of location shooting. This enviable situation is just one indication of the unique position Dick Smith holds in the field of movie makeup.

In his basement/workshop, Dick Smith stands in front of a collection of face casts, a record of the many actors he has worked with.

ALL PHOTOS: COURTESY OF DICK SMITH

He has worked with such prestigious actors as Marlon Brando, Dustin Hoffman and Sir Laurence Olivier, has contributed to classics like *Little Big Man* and *The Godfather,* and has terrified horror fans with bizarre phenomena in such pictures as *The Exorcist* and *Scanners*. He is commonly regarded as the foremost figure in both character makeup and special makeup effects and is constantly sought after by young makeup artists for advice and guidance. If any movie technician has enough laurels to rest on, Dick Smith is the one, but instead he continues to take on new challenges and devise new state-of-the-art techniques.

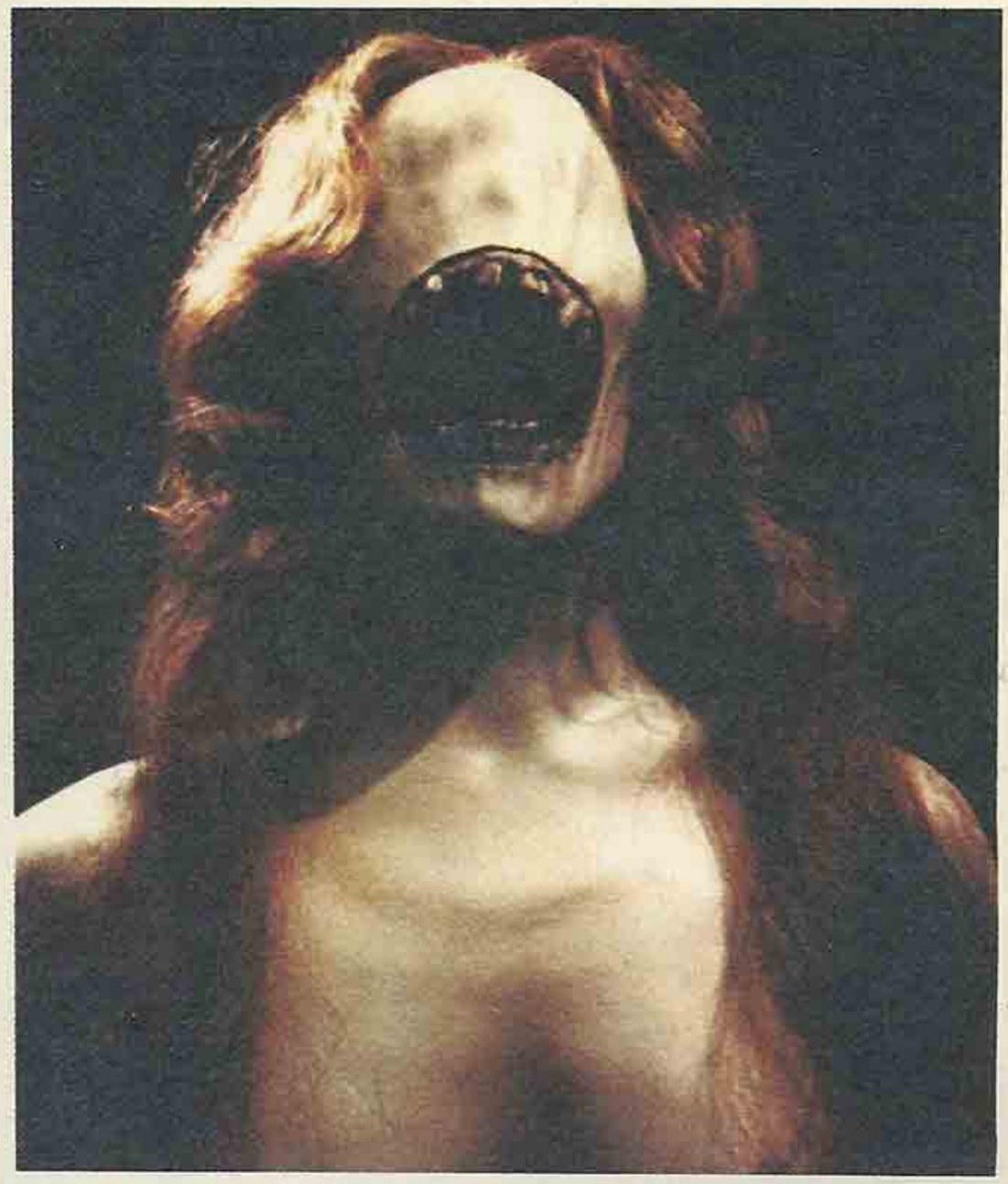
Most recently Smith has applied his considerable talents to the film version of Peter Straub's *Ghost Story*. For this production, Smith has created a series of four ghastly figures which appear at dramatic points in the story to remind the four aging central characters of a nearly forgotten transgression of their youth. The fourth creation was a decaying corpse that involved some elaborate effects work. When the car containing the body is hauled up out of the water and the rotting figure falls out onto the snow, the flesh slithers off the skull and slides down to the ground. As has happened so often in his career, Smith had to figure out a new method to accomplish this horrifying effect.

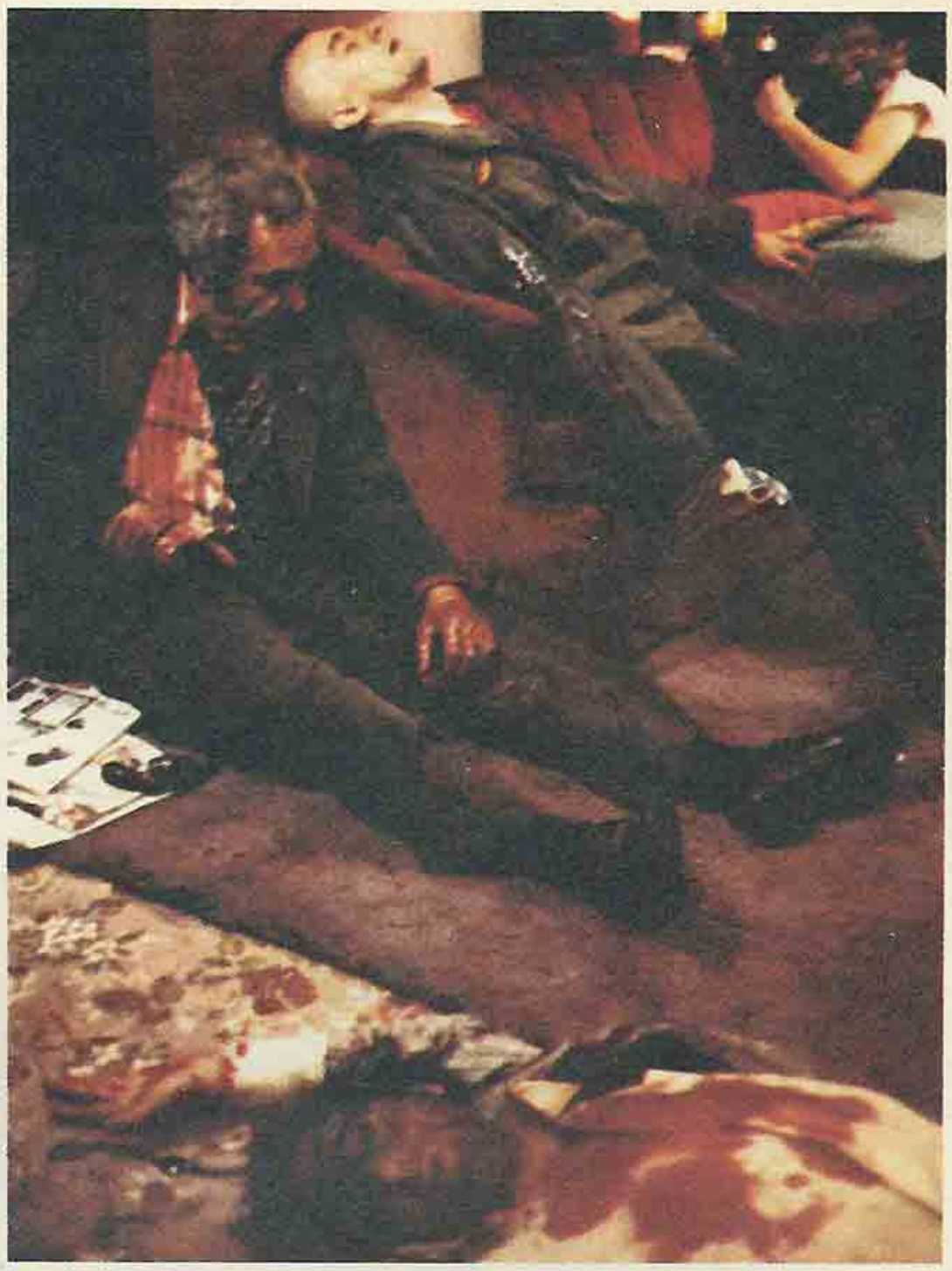
The uniqueness of Smith's career was apparent when he first entered the entertainment industry in 1945. When speaking about the procedure for breaking into the makeup field for the benefit of prospective artists, Smith likes to emphasize how difficult and lengthy the process usually is. To balance this statement, he makes a point of stressing that his career is in no way typical, "for which," he comments, "I am very thankful." Smith was fortunate enough to come onto the scene when a new and potentially far-reaching branch of the entertainment business was just opening up. "When I got out of the Army in late '44," he recalls, "I wanted to get into the movies, and I tried all the Hollywood studios. There was no chance whatsoever, so I turned to television which was just being reborn after the war; it had only barely started before the war. Young people may be amazed to realize that in 1945 NBC here in New York was on the air only a couple of days a week. It had only one little studio. And it had a very, very small staff; I mean, it had three directors, an assistant director, a newsman and his secretary, and I came into the art department, which consisted of a scenic artist, a wardrobe man, and a couple of wardrobe hands, period. That was it. I was the first makeup man on any television staff here in New York or any other city. Up until that time, when they needed makeup help they would hire someone on a daily basis. So I came in and started at NBC for 50 bucks a week."

Smith's training before this first job was not extensive by any means. "I only knew what I had taught myself as an amateur when I played around with makeup, mostly horror makeup at Yale University when I was a pre-med student before the war. I knew virtually nothing and I learned as I went along. Fortunately, everything was very amateurish in those days so my amateurishness didn't show. But I learned. I had to because, five years later, by 1950, television had grown so fast that I had twenty makeup artists working for me permanently on staff! And we had studios all over the city. It was incredible what happened in just five years. For me it was perfect timing, because I was thrown into every kind of work. I had to teach everybody else and I had to deal with beauty makeup, with character makeup, with beards, wigs, prosthetic appliances, everything."

Since he learned most of the fundamentals on-the-job, Smith is not particularly proud of the quality of his work when he was first beginning at NBC. "It was all very crude," he says. "I look back and, compared to what young people do today, it was appallingly crude. Young amateurs send me pictures of stuff that's better than what I did in those days. But nowadays, one

PHOTO: DAVID HUTCHISON



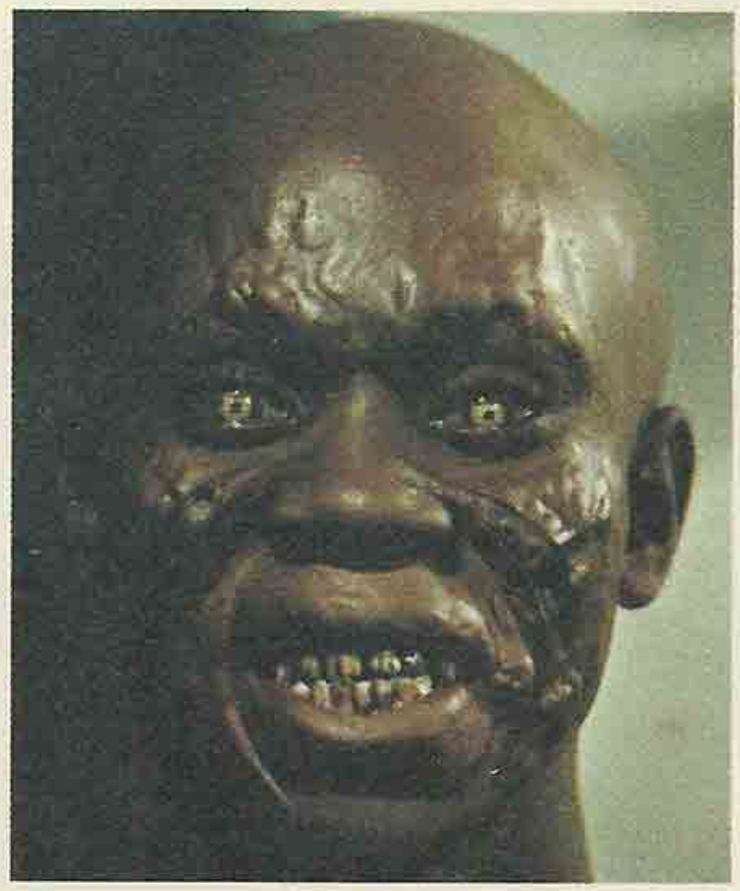


Above, a nightmarish dummy constructed by Smith for *Ghost Story* which did not make it to the final print. Right, some unnerving carnage supplied by Smith for the conclusion of *Taxi Driver*.

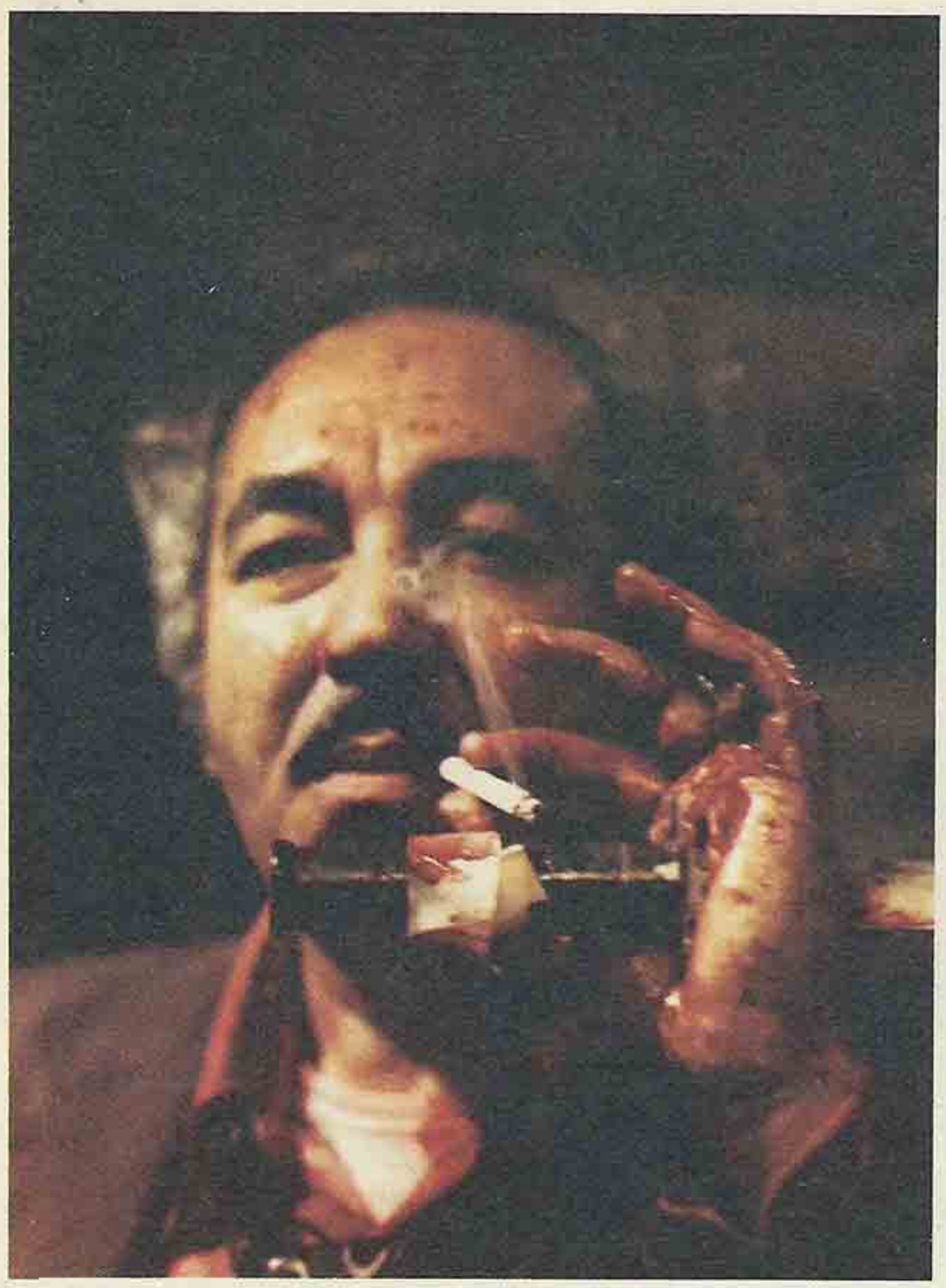
can achieve in half the time the level of expertise which I had developed. I took a long road and, also, I had no one to turn to. The other people in New York knew no more than I did, in fact less, and movies in New York did not have any Westmores or anyone like that to turn to, and even the few movie men who were older than I, were very secretive, so nothing was to be gained from them in terms of information . . . A person today can get to a very competent professional level in a much, much shorter time. There's no secrecy today. The only difference is, today you have to know a hell of a lot more. Today, to be considered really expert, not only can you learn twice as fast, you have twice as much to learn. So there's a trade-off there perhaps."

Although he may have serious reservations about the quality of his earliest makeups, he has the fondest of memories for that part of his life when television was a growing and spontaneous medium. "It's still a thrill to look back on it and think of all the exciting days—live television and quick changes and all the kinds of crazy things we had to do. What's been marvelous about my career is that I've experienced so much. I've experienced everything. I've experienced the birth of television, I created the colors for the palette for color television—I developed the stuff that's standard today, it's even used in the movies. I developed techniques; I didn't create foam latex—that came from the old Hollywood days—but I perfected a certain amount of technology. I invented a lot of things and I've done every kind of makeup. I did commercials, I did print ads—I used to be interviewed by magazines like *Vogue* and *Seventeen* as an expert on beauty. They wouldn't *dream* of calling me today, obviously, but that doesn't mean I don't know that sort of stuff. I have never really been compartmentalized in one special field. I've been able to do everything and that I feel very good about. I think it's more exciting that way."

Of all the different kinds of work Smith has done, the two that are the most spectacular are character makeup, such as the transformation of Dustin Hoffman into a hundred year old man in *Little Big Man* and Marlon Brando's unforgettable Don Corleone in *The Godfather,* and special makeup effects, as were seen in the demonic horrors of *The Exorcist* and the bizarre fantasies of *Altered States*. Smith finds satisfaction in both kinds of work, but says that he prefers character makeup. "It's really two different kinds of challenge," he explains. "Character make-



Two faces from Smith's gallery of horror. On the left is the final stage of disintegration from *Picture of Dorian Gray* and on the right is a demon-posessed boy from *Exorcist II—The Heretic*.

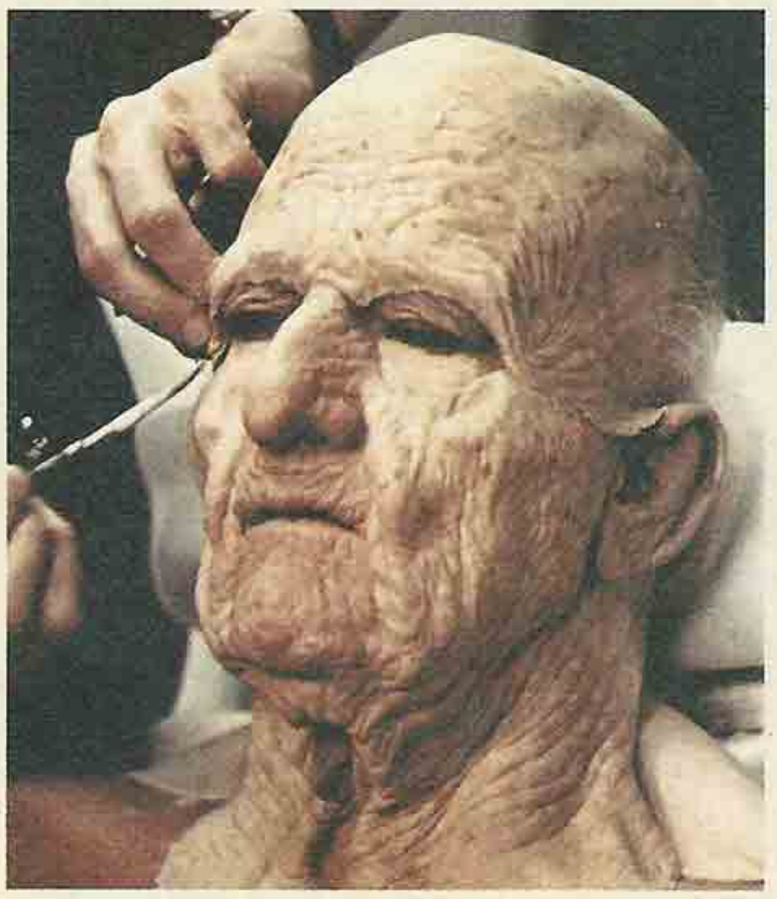


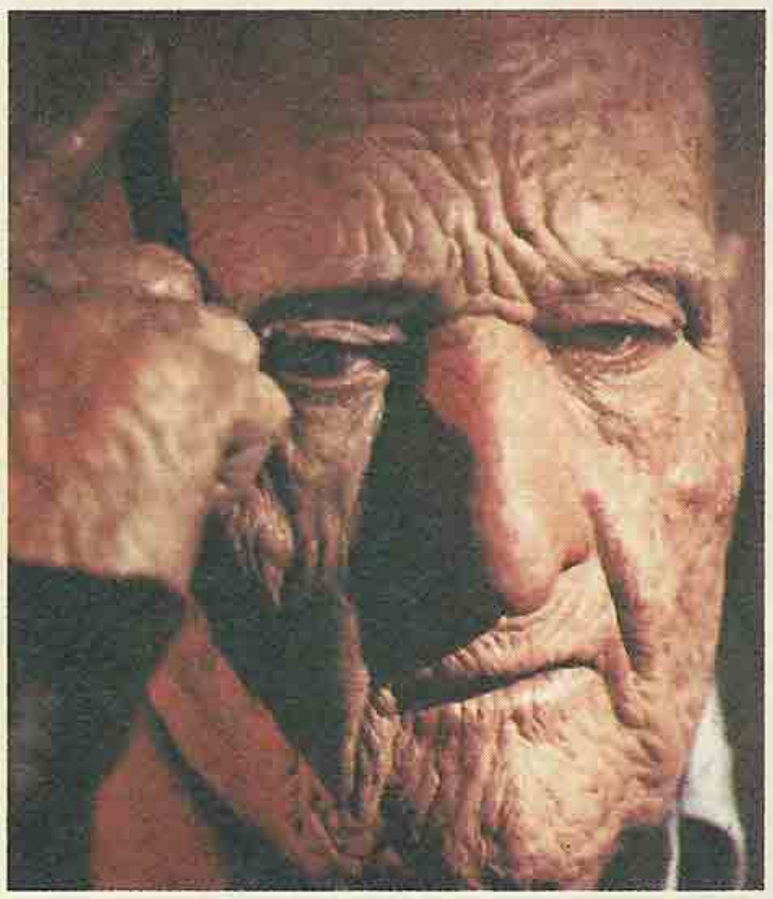
Left, a cast member of *Taxi Driver* smokes a cigarette between takes with a mangled hand created by Smith. Above is a dummy of Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. used as a double for the actor in *Ghost Story*.

up is mainly an artistic challenge to create a form, a character, and put it all together. There's technical things in it, of course, but you're trying to make some kind of personage come alive and there's a great artistic and creative satisfaction that you get when you do that. The effect problem is one where the challenge is mainly technical. You have to invent something technical that will make some illusion happen, and that's an inventive kind of situation. It's more inventive than creative, I should say, and it's a different kind of satisfaction. It can be equally stimulating and certainly just as challenging, sometimes more so, and I enjoy it, but when I think of the two, I feel happier with the character aspect."

He attributes much of his preference for character makeup to the fact that he feels more comfortable when creating a new screen persona. "I probably feel more secure with character work, frankly. For one thing, character makeup on any really reputable film is something you test beforehand and usually you can work all the bugs out of it in one or two tests, so that when you go on to really do it on camera you feel quite confident it's going to look fine and there's going to be no real surprises, no mishaps.

"But the effect job is always fraught with disaster. The more complicated it is, the more difficult it is to test extensively before you actually do it. All right, so you do one test end if it goes at all well that's probably the only test you'll do. You make adjustments for the next time you actually do it on camera and you hope that those adjustments are the right ones and that it's going to go splendidly. Another worry on effects is that it takes more than one





Smith fits latex appliances onto Dustin Hoffman for the remarkable scenes of Hoffman as a 100 year old man in *Little Big Man*.

PHOTO: DAVID HUTCHISON

Dick Smith stands in front of his collection of statuettes. When he used to have to spend long hours on location, Smith sculpted these likenesses of actors to pass the time between takes.

person to operate the damn thing; to a certain extent it's out of your control by virtue of the fact that more people are involved in it. You've got more possibilities of someone goofing. And the effect happens very quickly, they're shot only once. They've taken a tremendous amount of time to prepare, therefore they're very costly and if something goes wrong it's a real financial disaster. The pressure therefore is *tremendous* on these effects." When speaking about this pressure, Smith doesn't bother to mince his words; in fact, he likens the experience to a military maneuver. He says that makeup effects work can be "like going over the top. It really is. You're going into battle and it's all going to be over in a few minutes and you're either going to live or die."

Smith's tenure as NBC's chief makeup artist lasted from 1945 to 1959. At that point he began free-lancing, as well as working on a regular basis for David Susskind's production company. Smith's association with Susskind resulted in two significant developments in his career. In 1962 he made the transition from television to feature films as the makeup artist on Susskind's movie version of *Requiem for a Heavyweight*. Around the same time, Susskind was also producing a horror series called *Way Out*. Smith had been an admirer of Jack Pierce in particular and monster makeup in general and now he had the opportunity to put this interest to work. For *Way Out* he got to create a Quasimodo-type character and an especially bizarre makeup job of a man whose face is partially wiped clean of all features. When Susskind produced a television version of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* Smith then produced the hideous representation of the title character's moral disintegration.

In the early sixties, when these programs were first aired, James Warren's *Famous Monsters of Filmland* was making inroads on the newsstand. As a veteran horror movie fan, Smith was intrigued by the success of this magazine and approached Warren about the idea of publishing photographs of his work on *Way Out* and *Dorian Gray*. Warren used the photographs and the two men became friends. A Dick Smith makeup book evolved from this friendship. The book proved to be a catalyst for a new generation of makeup hobbyists and professionals; unfortunately, it also developed into a major business disappointment for Smith.

The project seemed innocent enough at first. "I had toyed with the idea of writing a text book on makeup. I had started it a number of times but it was a terribly big job. And then, remembering the great fun I had had in college making myself up as monsters and scaring my classmates, I said, 'Why don't I just write a little book, about doing monster makeups. I'll do it just for kids, showing them the easy way to do things that I used to do. That'll be simple and I can just knock it off in a short time and maybe I can make a little money on it too." Smith spoke to Warren about the idea and the publisher of *Famous Monsters* encouraged him to go ahead with it.

Smith proceeded to take the photographs, work out the formulations, practice the techniques, recruit the models and write the text. The "little book" ended up requiring practically a year of hard work. When the project was finally complete, Smith then found that no publishers were interested. As far as the hardcover publishers were concerned, the idea was just not practical. They pointed out that 80% of sales

on hardback children's books were generated by libraries, schools and similar institutions, and these organizations would tend to take a dim view of a book on monster makeup, still a disreputable topic at the time. The remaining 20% were bought by parents who would be no more likely to buy a book that would teach their children how to turn themselves into monsters. When Smith received this grim news, he thought, " 'Oh what an idiot I was to go ahead and do this because no one's going to publish it.' I told Warren about my disappointment and he said, 'Well, I've got an idea. I've been thinking about it and I'm not surprised. I'll tell you what we can do. Let me publish it in a magazine format. We'll publish it, we'll give you a royalty, and we'll put it out for Halloween. If it goes, we'll reissue it every Halloween for a number of years.' I said, 'Gee, that sounds great.' So we made a deal and I went ahead then and finished it up and turned the stuff over to him."

Warren had some trouble making Smith's manuscript fit his usual magazine format and Smith eventually had to do most of the editorial work himself. Smith recalls that he did virtually all of the artwork, the proofreading, the editing, the lay-outs and the captions; in effect, just about everything except the cover. The relationship between Smith and Warren up until this time had been extremely friendly. After the publication came out, the makeup artist then received reports that the magazine, entitled the *Famous Monsters Makeup Handbook,* was not selling very well. To the best of his memory, Smith then found it increasingly difficult to contact Warren. The publisher was always busy and had no time to talk. Smith finally found it impossible to contact Warren at all. The following year the handbook was not brought out for Halloween but over the course of the next few years it continued to be sold through the back-issue department. Smith had now concluded that the magazine was a financial failure. Unable to get any information from Warren, he consulted lawyers and was advised there was very little that he could do under the circumstances. Finally, as the handbook continued to be sold and its reputation grew, Smith retained a lawyer to act on the situation. As a result, he was able to stop the distribution of the magazine, reach a settlement over back-royalties and take possession of the remaining copies.

The next chapter in the *Famous Monsters Makeup Handbook* saga came to Smith's attention around two years ago when he was informed by a friend that a conspicuously familiar-looking new makeup book was on the market. According to Smith, 80% of this new book was lifted virtually intact from his old Warren handbook; the plagiarizing was so indiscriminate, in fact, that the author even copied those Smith makeup formulas that included items which had not been available for years. The publisher was a reputable, if unwitting, company and it immediately pulled the book off the stands and reached a settlement with Smith as soon as the makeup artist's lawyer informed the publisher of the nature of the book in question.

Smith works on actor Charles Korvin for an episode of NBC's *Chevrolet on Broadway* in 1956. An old friend hangs in the background.

As distressing as this experience may have been, Smith was able to find some encouragement in the other author's act of plagiarism. "I figured, well, there was something there worth copying and it is now saleable. In other words, the book that could never be published in hardback had been published in hardback and was doing okay. I think it is a valuable property which I will defend, and if anyone else tries to copy it I will sue them. One day I hope I'll get around to bringing it out again because I never have forgotten the fun I had with first transforming myself with makeup, and that book, I think, would give any young person a damn good start on having that same kind of fun whether they intend to become a makeup artist or not."

Although it may have taken a plagiarized book to make Smith realize the full value of his *Famous Monsters Makeup Handbook,* young makeup enthusiasts have known how instructive and inspiring the book has been for years. Smith's work on both the TV and movie screens, as well as his much-studied handbook, have made him *the* great mentor for anyone interested in entering the makeup field, whether they be neophyte hobbyist or aspiring professional. The number of people who contact Smith with questions about the technique and business of makeup is enormous. In response to the question, "Do you receive a great deal of mail from makeup enthusiasts?" Smith responds by saying, "You want to see my file?"

The mail has been coming in for many years, but it has gotten significantly heavier recently. Many of the letters are written by prospective makeup artists. "I try to answer all letters," says Smith. "That sometimes gets to be quite a burden because in recent times I've had as many as half a dozen or so letters at a clip. With my time so short it's very difficult to find time to answer these letters adequately. It used to be that I would always return photographs of the people's work that I got from letter writers. Now I ask them to keep at least a few because my big problem is I sometimes get them mixed up. I hear from so many people and since they are only voices in the dark it's very hard to keep them sorted out and pictures do help me to put a tag on them. So I file the letters carefully and now staple the pictures to them and so forth whenever possible, so I have some idea of what their talents are, how much they have done, how I can advise and help them. I have been able to steer a few people into apprenticeships but that's *extremely* rare. Only around 1% out of all those letter writers. And that only happens with the extremely tal-

(Continued on Page 53)

Tobe Hooper on *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Poltergeist*

The Director's Behind-the-Scenes View of his First Terror Film, and of the Controversy Surrounding his Spielberg-Produced Ghost Epic!

By Bob Martin

Obtaining an interview with Tobe Hooper was incredibly easy, once we knew where to call; Hooper even asked why he hadn't heard from us sooner. We told him that we had been dealing with publicity channels, and repeated what we'd been told by *Poltergeist*'s publicity agents—that Mr. Hooper was "unavailable for interviews" and, on another occasion, had "disappeared." "It sounds like there's been a conspiracy to keep us apart, Bob," he half-joked, and continued, more seriously, "Another magazine said that I was 'hiding out.' Since the movie opened, I went to Texas for a five-day vacation, and then I moved from Hollywood to a new home on the Hollywood Palisades; maybe 20 miles away. I haven't been hiding out at all."

Hooper *has* been busy, however; he's been developing a new project, called *The Lights,* a contemporary action/fantasy picture for Twentieth Century-Fox. It was in between preproduction meetings and after a typical 16-hour day that Hooper made time for our two interview sessions.

The first of these was entirely devoted to *Texas Chainsaw Massacre,* a talk we'd been planning since our first Hooper interview, back in issue #12. At the time, Hooper had said that one factor in the decision to make *TCM* was a matter of survival as a filmmaker, after *Eggshells*—a film that was well received by critics, but was never widely distributed. But what brought Hooper together with his co-writer and associate producer, Kim Henkel, and what other factors motivated him to bring this particular story to the screen?

"Kim was one of the actors in *Eggshells,*" Hooper recalls. "That was how we met, and as we worked together, Kim helped to develop it. Eventually we came to be collaborators on the script. Following *Eggshells*, we worked a year or so together, and worked out the specifications on several projects; finally, we came up with *Texas Chainsaw.*

"I did want to get a certain kind of attention, and it seemed almost impossible to get the kind of attention I needed to go forward with my career with anything but a piece in the horror genre. That was basically it, though my appreciation for the genre didn't hurt anything."

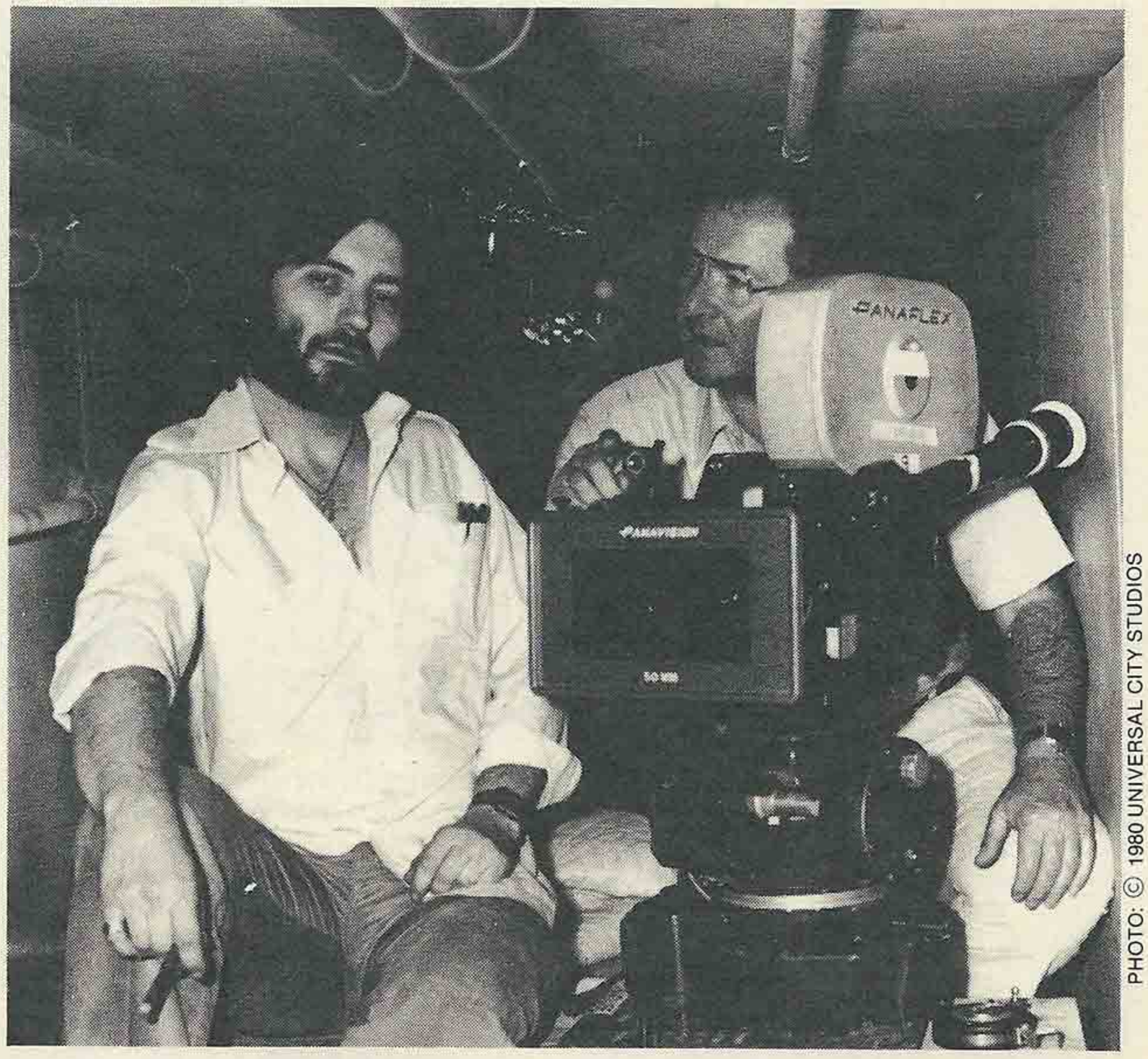


PHOTO: © 1980 UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS

Hooper confers with *Funhouse* cinematographer Andrew Lazlo.

Hooper's first film as a teenaged do-it-yourselfer had been an 8mm remake of Corman's *House of Usher,* and he later developed a passion for the films of Hammer. "There was never one I missed," he says. "It used to take three or four months for a new movie to get to Palestine, Texas, where I was living, so I used to catch a train from Palestine into Houston to see them, and come back that night; *The Curse of Frankenstein,* in color. . . *The Horror of Dracula* . . . the both of them worked a number on my mind. So a lot of the films I was doing in 8mm paid homage to what those guys were doing overseas."

Hooper encountered a different sort of horror a few years later, which was to have a more immediate influence on his film career. "A friend of mine suggested that I go to see *Night of the Living Dead*, a 16 mm print that was playing on the University of Texas campus auditorium. It was an inspiration. When I saw the film, and the audience reaction, I knew that this was the place to find that attention."

Together, Hooper and Henkel put together a story that they believed in, based in part upon the infamous career of mass murderer Ed Gein, a figure that had also inspired Robert Bloch's original story for *Psycho*. Preproduction commenced long before the film was fully financed.

"I had no money to speak of at the start," Hooper recalls. "All I had was seed money, for Bob Burns and myself to start working on the design of the picture, and the props, so I could show something to the potential investors. I had been in business as a documentary and commercial filmmaker, so I had some equipment, but I had no idea at the time who I would go to for money. I started just piecemealing the thing together; after Bob Burns had built the bone furniture, and after Kim and I had finished the screenplay, I

TCM PHOTOS: © 1980 NEW LINE CINEMA

Hooper cast Burns in TCM and in *Eaten Alive*, he says, because "among her many talents is a unique gift for expressing hysteria."

had something to show, and the money came together very rapidly—within about six weeks. But it was 'do it or bust.' I *had* to do it. As I saw it then and as I look back at it now, I really didn't have any options but to find a way to make the film, and I would have. I considered the possibility of buying the entire raw film stock on credit, getting everyone to work on spec, and doing the film in 10 days, if necessary. I felt that strongly about the piece; the screenplay seemed like such a natural. But I got into the film, and into the casting, without any money . . . it was fortunate that the money came together, though it would have, anyway, on the strength of the script.

"It seemed like I had a different budget in each pocket; I was ready to do it for $10,000, if necessary. But we started with $60,000 cash, which later went up to $93,000. That afforded us a 10 to one shooting ratio, whereas nowadays on an $11 million picture I'm shooting two and three to one; but it was a little newer to me then."

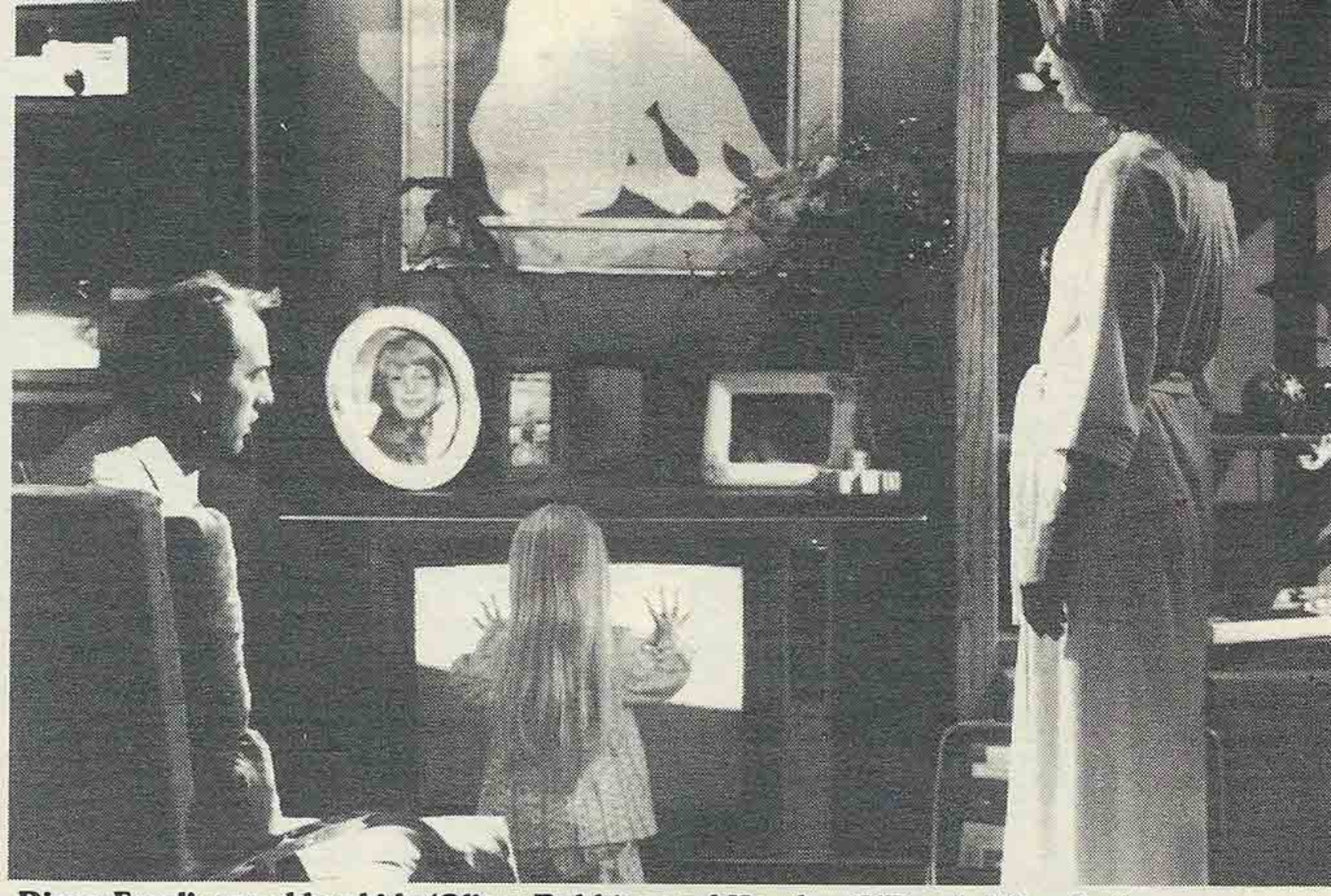
One of *TCM*'s greatest strengths is in its sense of place, evoked by the film's locations and by the relationships in imaginary space that Hooper creates among the two houses, the gas station, the highway and the forest. "I adapted some of the things in the script to the location, but the long hallway at the front of the house was something that I'd needed, and we put in the sliding metal door, as well as the cattle ramp to the killing area. But the script was really loose in terms of stage direction, so we were able to adapt it readily to the location's potentials.

The actual locations were, in fact, in quite a different arrangement than the one portrayed in the film. "The gas station was about 25 miles away from the house," Hooper recalls, "and the old, dilapidated house of the grandfather actually faced the chainsaw house from across the street, though it appeared in the film that it was approached from behind, coming from the first house. In the last scene of the picture, when Ed Neal is run over by the truck and there's that whole confrontation, I had to shoot around that house to avoid showing it."

Though *Texas Chainsaw* is a film made largely without the benefit of graphic gore, it has its share of scenes that are calculated to wrench a strong reaction from any audience. What other film has had the audacity to take a weak and unlikeable character, place him in a wheelchair, and send him into the forest alone, to face a chainsaw maniac? Even many horror fans found certain scenes of *TCM*, however bloodless, to be too threaten-

Somewhere in this forest is a chainsaw maniac. This is cause of considerable concern for Marilyn Burns.

A *literal* armchair, as well as an arm-lamp, are among the grotesque props built by *TCM* art director Bob Burns (*not* the Bob Burns who plays Tracy the Ape; this one also worked on *The Howling*— note the resemblance to Eddie Quist's lodgings).



Diane Freeling and her kids (Oliver Robbins and Heather O'Rourke) flee their haunted suburban home.

Drew Barrymore is engrossed in the communications of "the TV people"—and she doesn't mean Smurfs.

ing to be accepted as entertainment when it was first released. But since the onslaught of modern slaughter-film techniques, *TCM* is just as likely to be criticized for lacking the element of graphic gore offered by most films of its budget and theme.

"At the time that the film was made," Hooper says, "we hadn't yet been saturated with offensive things in movies; it was kind of fun to be shocked in that way, I thought—at least, as a young moviegoer, I always wondered, when are they gonna go ahead and show me something? But I did avoid being overly graphic; just as in a dramatic situation, you want to save the impact of a good closeup, I saved the one graphic scene, where Leatherface falls on the chainsaw, till the very end."

Hooper served as his own editor on *Texas Chainsaw Massacre,* which is seldom possible on studio films, largely because of the time factor. "Working with a good editor on a big budget project can be just as satisfying," says Hooper. "In that case, they are cutting the picture and I can watch the picture develop while I am shooting. With *Chainsaw*, none of the picture was cut until after the picture was finished, not even a cut to insure continuity. It was shooting a picture, and then having 60,000 feet of film in cans to put it together from.

On that low a budget, the coverage that I had available was almost kaleidoscopic, particularly toward the end of the film. Cost prohibits that kind of coverage on a studio film. Also, I shoot now in a Panavision format, which is a 2.33 aspect ratio, and that brings a difference in the editing. You can't make those fast cuts on the wide screen, 70mm format that you can in 1.85—it's too far for the eye to travel."

Abrupt Transition

Having accepted without question what we'd been told by *Poltergeist*'s agents and producers, we didn't expect that Hooper would be very willing to speak about the film, or that he would have much to add to previously published reports.

But Hooper did have a great deal to add to what had already been said in print by Marshall and Spielberg. It wasn't exactly a "fun" topic for either of us; the smile went out of Hooper's voice during this part of our conversation, and I had to abandon the list of questions that we'd prepared on *Poltergeist*. Based on what we thought we knew about *Poltergeist,* our questions simply didn't relate to Hooper's conception of his role as the film's director.

Eerie voices emanate from the Freeling TV set—and it's not Zacherle!

POLTERGEIST PHOTOS: © 1982 METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER/SLM ENTERTAINMENT

Craig T. Nelson vents his wrath on the real estate developer (known to New Yorkers as the Pathmark grocery man) in *Poltergeist*'s closing scenes.

Hooper's story offers considerably more detail about the origin of the film than we've seen elsewhere. "My interest in ghosts and poltergeists goes back to when I was still living in Texas," he says. "Shortly after my father's death, about two days after—the drinking glasses in the kitchen all exploded and showered. Various little ceramic souvenirs we'd had on a shelf flew across the room and broke; the water glasses were replaced, and they exploded again a day later."

"So I do very much believe that there's an energy that can manifest itself, that's beyond our hearing and sight.

"I started working on *Poltergeist* close to 8 years ago," says Hooper. "I had always been impressed with Robert Wise's picture *The Haunting*, and I wondered why the hell hadn't someone done a ghost story again? I first came to Hollywood under Billy Friedkin's banner; I still regard Friedkin as my mentor. When I got a Universal development contract at that time, I just happened to get Bob Wise's office; he had just moved out, after working on *The Hindenberg*, and he had left a book behind, and the title of the book was *Poltergeist*. I talked to Friedkin about it, and he and I were going to present to Universal a picture about poltergeist phenomena that would be done in their Sensurround sound process. I was fascinated by the technical challenge—to make you feel the poltergeist presence. So I started working on it then, with a family situation, people who were next-door neighbors to a cemetery. I went on to other projects with Friedkin, but continued working on *Poltergeist*, on and off, for eight years. Then, when I started shooting *Funhouse,* Steven called me in Florida, and asked me to come back—there was something that he wanted me to do. I came back, and he wanted me to do a follow-up to *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, the film that eventually came to be E.T., though what he described to me was very different. I explained to him, that really wasn't my kind of thing; but I'd always wanted to do a film about ghosts and poltergeists. He said, fantastic, and at that point we set about creating *Poltergeist;* we worked on it in London while he was shooting *Raiders.* So I have literally been on this project for eight years."

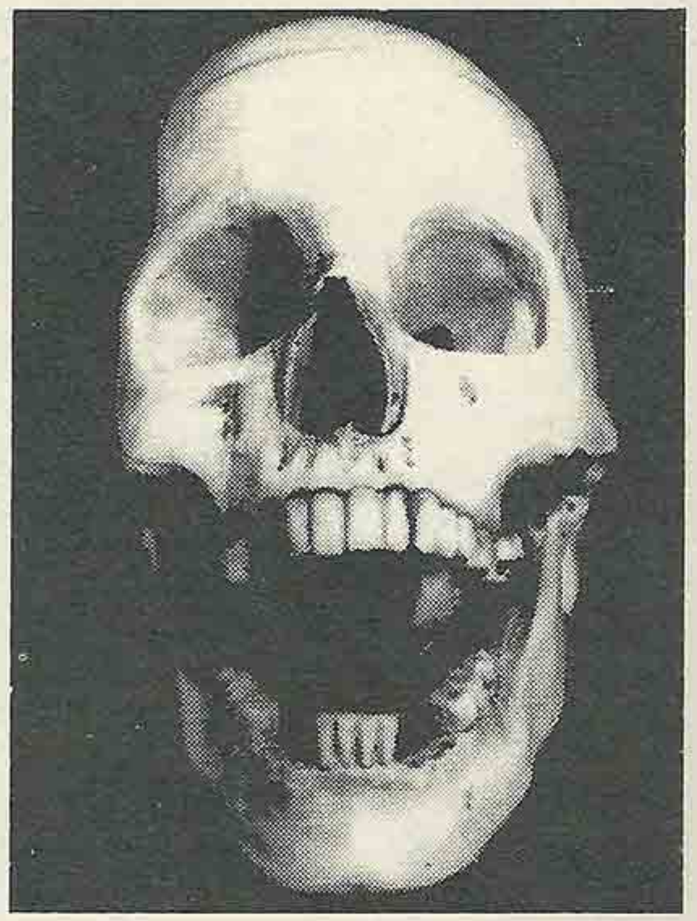
The story of the completed film, says Hooper, is true to his own conception, as modified by Hooper in tandem with Spielberg. "I didn't have a conclusion, originally; it was a matter of wrapping up the ideas, finishing it. The idea of the girl kidnapped by the dead came late in development, and that was Steven's and mine."

The kidnapping of children by preternatural forces is a plot device as old as "The Pied Piper"—a more recent example is *Watcher in the Woods*—yet certain plot similiarities between Richard Matheson *Twilight Zone* episode "Little Girl Lost" and *Poltergeist* have been the cause of some controversy. "It was noticed," says Hooper, "but only after the fact."

the film was extensively storyboarded as part of the collaborative preproduction. "The storyboards were done from the script," says Hooper, "and were often used with some flexibility, according to what was made possible by our physical set-up. When you plan a picture on paper, even though you know you'll make changes, you need to know what you're going to cover before you know how those changes will come about—through locations, through the actors' input, or input from the cinematographer. No matter how you change what you've predesigned, you go for that number of set-ups; it's very helpful in terms of coming in on time and under budget. I'm storyboarding my new film now.

"There were two weeks of location shooting in Simi Valley; the exteriors in the first part of the picture are practical locations, and the exterior toward the end, when the street erupts, coffins coming through, turning the Volkswagen over, and the getaway sequence, with the station wagon driving down the street. Aside from that, it was all shot at MGM, except of course the effects

Authentic Replica of a
HUMAN SKULL



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shot at ILM up north."

On the soundstage, part of the front of the house and some of the walkway were reproduced from the location, as were the backyard and swimming pool, as part of a huge composite set that included the dining room, kitchen, living room and staircase of the Freeling home. "The composite set covered three soundstages at MGM," says Hooper, "and there were duplicate sets of several rooms, such as the children's bedroom, which had to be destroyed in various stages. One of those was on the gimbel—the largest gimbel ever constructed for a film—which was used to turn the bedroom upside down. The same gimbel was also used for the duplicate set of Steve and Diane Freelings' bedroom, where JoBeth is pushed up the wall and across the ceiling."

That particular scene struck us as one that had not gone so far as it might have. The scene is suggestive of invisible rape, but falls short of portraying it as a truly horrible experience. "It was that originally in the script," says Hooper, "and to soften the point, in order to get a PG rating, the literal rape was taken out. Originally, you would have seen invisible fingerprints, pressing her face and her body. Also there was another version of that scene shot where she goes up the wall, and a Roerscach pattern, similar to the stain burnt into the wall earlier in the picture by the spirits emerging from the TV set, appears and spreads like a giant black spider with tendrils. Like the closet, it becomes a living thing trying to 'get' Diane Freeling. We decided that it detracted from the closet, and wasn't quite as magical as an invisible force."

The climactic scene, a potential strategic nightmare, went off smoothly thanks to the on-set effects expertise of Mike Woods, who had some help in the design of the hydraulic systems from Roy Arbogast. "They were ready for me," says Hooper, "so it wasn't that time consuming. Pieces of the floor were taken up, the linoleum scored to break on cue, and so on. We only had one shot at it, you know—it was strictly a one-take situation, with multiple cameras."

One of the unique aspects of *Poltergeist* is that it is a ghost story that takes place in a brightly-lit suburban world, and that much of it plays more like a fantasy than an out-and-out horror film. To some, this has been taken as evidence of a rift between Hooper and Spielberg as to how the film should have been handled. But, according to Hooper, he and Spielberg were in complete agreement about the wisdom of that approach, and that it was developed as part of a full collaboration between the two.

In fact, Hooper is far from pleased by the interviews with *Poltergeist*'s producers that have suggested that his role as a director was more technical than it was creative. "It seemed to me that the relationship between Steve and I was analogous to the relationship between George and Steven on *Raiders*. I thought, at the time, it was one of the best working relationships I'd ever had between a producer and director, and all of this was news to me. It came to my attention just a few days before the picture was released. I think it's really a shame; it's been personally damaging, and it's certainly knocked me out of competition for the Academy Awards this year. It's a tough business."

Because these accounts differ so widely, we can only speculate as to who is telling the "real story" behind the film. Speculation is not for us; the future will test both men's honesty and ability more reliably than we ever could.

So, instead of speculation, we'll offer Hooper's answer concerning Mike McCracken, who worked tirelessly on the film's makeup effects, and who conceived the "deteriorating head" effects scene, but whose name was omitted from the credits:

"*Poltergeist* will always be a tricky movie," Hooper said. "A number of people who should have gotten credit, didn't get credit. There's a lot of magic and business mysticism connected with it. We're *all* still trying to figure this one out."

A Smoother Transition

Hooper's distress over *Poltergeist* has not diminished the pleasure in his new home, away from the hubbub of Hollywood. "You wouldn't believe it," says Hooper. "It's away from the grind, just wonderfully normal; like *Leave It To Beaver*. There's trees, you can hear the birds—no traffic noise. There's a nice park nearby where you can watch the softball games, and play tennis, or you can walk through the little village nearby. It's made being in Los Angeles a lot more peaceful. It's a big difference."

The Palisades give Hooper a quiet harbor to return to following his hectic days working on *The Lights*.

"It's about a discovery, and a trek back to the genesis of man," Hooper tells us. "It also has to do with the civilization of Mu, which preceded Atlantis, and with the time that matter began respond to the energy of imagination and thought—and it concerns matter-movers and shape-changers. And of course, the Lights."

Shooting is tentatively scheduled to start at the end of this year, for a 1983 release.

JoBeth Williams at the start of her not-quite-a-rape scene.

GOTCHA!

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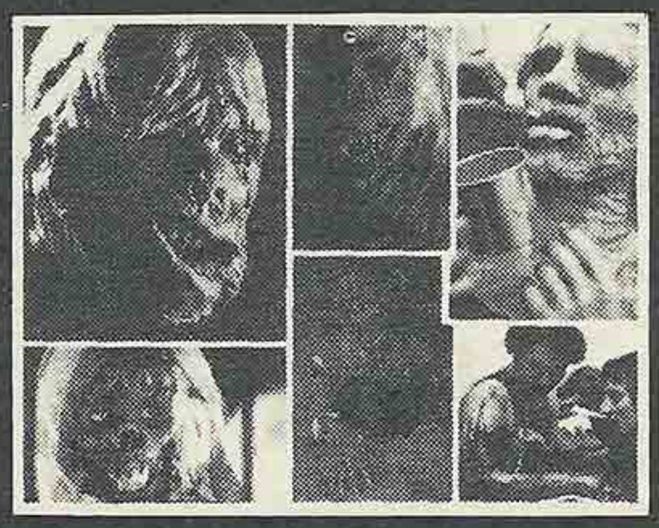

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POLTERGEIST

An Interview with producer Frank Marshall

By Bob Martin

Are you ready for a Spielberg summer?

The weeks ahead of us will see the release of two major productions from the man who terrified us with *Jaws,* astounded us with *Close Encounters* and left us breathless with *Raiders of the Lost Ark;* and *Raiders* itself will be released for another go-round this July, in celebration of its five Academy Awards. The early Spielbergs, from *Sugarland Express* to *1941,* will be surfacing once again on cable and at the revival houses—the perennial summer favorites will no doubt be in special demand this year. As we said, it's a Spielberg summer.

The new Spielbergs include *The Extra- Terrestrial,* an SF opus covered in the current STARLOG. But those looking for chills of fright on a hot summer's day will particularly welcome the first of these marvels to arrive. *Poltergeist,* billed as "the first real ghost story," could also be considered Spielberg's first true horror film. While *Jaws* certainly had all the shocks and the structure of a first-rate monster movie, it never strayed too far from the known, natural world. *Raiders* certainly had a horrifying climax, but its story was dominated by action-adventure elements. In *Poltergeist,* however, things get weird.

Spielberg's producing partner on *Poltergeist* was also the producer of *Raiders,* Frank Marshall. Marshall describes his first memories of moviegoing as dominated by a passion for monster and sci-fi fare—*Forbidden Planet, Them!, House on Haunted Hill* and *The Tingler* are the titles that spring to his mind from his summer afternoons spent at the Fox Theater in Van Nuys, California.

Marshall's father was Jack Marshall, a composer and musician. "You might say I had a 'show biz' background," he says. "My father did some film and television music, and I had a general interest in the arts, but I never even thought about a career in movies until I was nearly out of college." That was when Marshall met Peter Bogdanovich, then a young film scholar and critic, at a party at the home of John Ford. "He was there to write a monogram on Ford for the Museum of Modern Art, and he was also writing a book on him. We hit it off great, and he said, 'Listen, I'm going to get a chance to make a movie in about three months . . .' I told him that if he needed anybody to empty the wastebaskets, to give me a call, and he did."

Marshall continued to work toward

JoBeth Williams finds some unexpected companions in the family pool, courtesy of makeup effects men Craig Reardon and Mike McCracken.

ALL PHOTOS: © 1982 MGM FILM CO.

Psychic researchers Beatrice Straight and Richard Lawson attempt to console Mr. Freeling (Craig T. Nelson); below *Poltergeist*'s exec producer, writer, and guiding force, Steven Spielberg.

his degree in political science from UCLA after his first experience with Bogdanovich. The picture was *Targets,* the last picture Boris Karloff ever made, and one of his finest. Karloff essentially played himself in the film—Byron Orlock, a great horror actor who has watched the horror genre fade from its once-classic proportions (footage from AIP's *The Terror* amply demonstrated that). Orlock's opposite number in the film is a figure of real horror that, the story suggests, has replaced fantasy; a mass murderer who sees his victims as anonymous targets.

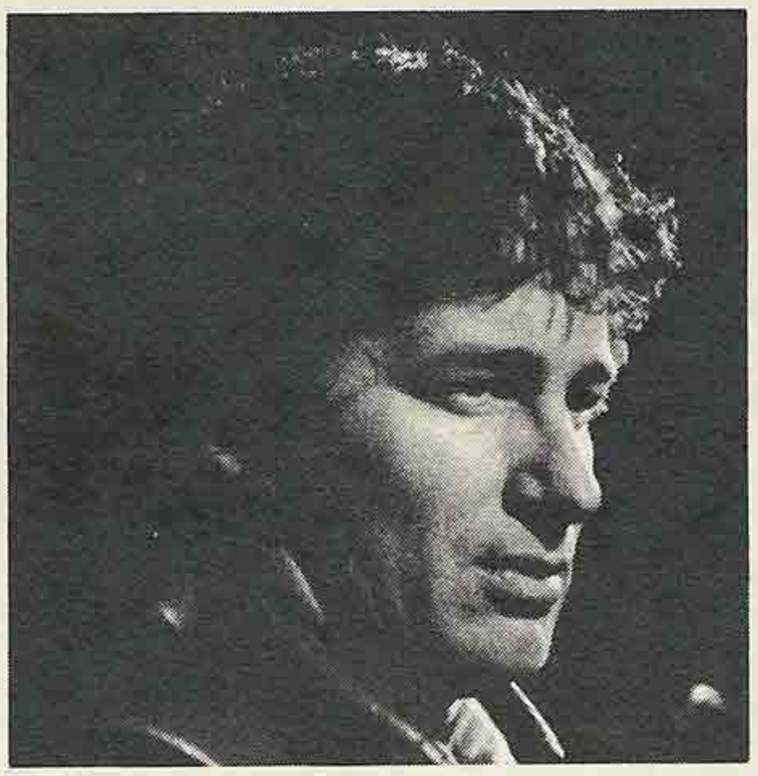
"The picture had come about because Roger Corman had two more weeks of shooting with Karloff on a contract from some previous pictures," Marshall recalls. "Corman told Bogdanovich that he would give him $125,000 to make a picture provided that he use Karloff and some footage from *The Terror* in it—apparently Corman needed to use it to write off the costs. So it was like a puzzle that Peter had to put together to make a story, and he did so, brilliantly.

"Because it was low-budget film, it was the best introduction to moviemaking that I could have had. Working as Bodganovich's assistant, I was able to dabble into all the different areas—I did a little acting, shot some footage, helped build sets. And I got to see how everything went together. I found that I absolutely loved it, every second of it."

Speeding things up a bit (we are supposed to tell you about *Poltergeist,* right?), Marshall became a regular member on Bogdanovich crews through *Nickolodeon,* rising to associate producer level with *Paper Moon* (not very scary, but still one of Uncle Bob's favorites). During the same period, Marshall served as line-producer on Orson Welles' still-unfinished epic, *The Other Side of the Wind*. (Welles, Marshall says, is a genius. But this picture isn't scary, either, so we'll move on.) Marshall then became associated with Walter Hill, as producer on *The Driver* and on *The Warriors,* which was kind of scary and gets its own paragraph.

"It was one of those miracles of filmmaking," says Marshall, "where you go through hell and come up with a great product." Time-pressures were on to get out the first of a flurry of teenage gang pictures—but few sets are more confining or harder to light than the interiors of New York's subway system; and because the city of N.Y. needs the subways for its own purposes during the day, all of that footage was shot late at night, 62 nights in a row.

Spielberg, meanwhile, first met Marshall in 1973, while passing through Italy on a promotional tour for the European theatrical release of *Duel.*



Bogdanovich and crew were on location for *Daisy Miller,* and Spielberg made a social call on Bogdanovich and editor Verna Fields (who had also cut *Sugarland Express).* Several years later, when George Lucas asked Steven Spielberg who he wanted to produce *Raiders,* Marshall came to mind.

Before *Raiders* came about, Marshall worked in preproduction on Lucasfilm's *Radioland Murders,* an unpublicized project that has since been shelved. It was to be a private eye mystery-comedy with music set in and around a 1940's radio station. "It was an idea that had a lot of potential," Marshall says, "but it just wasn't the right time or place for it."

Plans for *Poltergeist* began to form

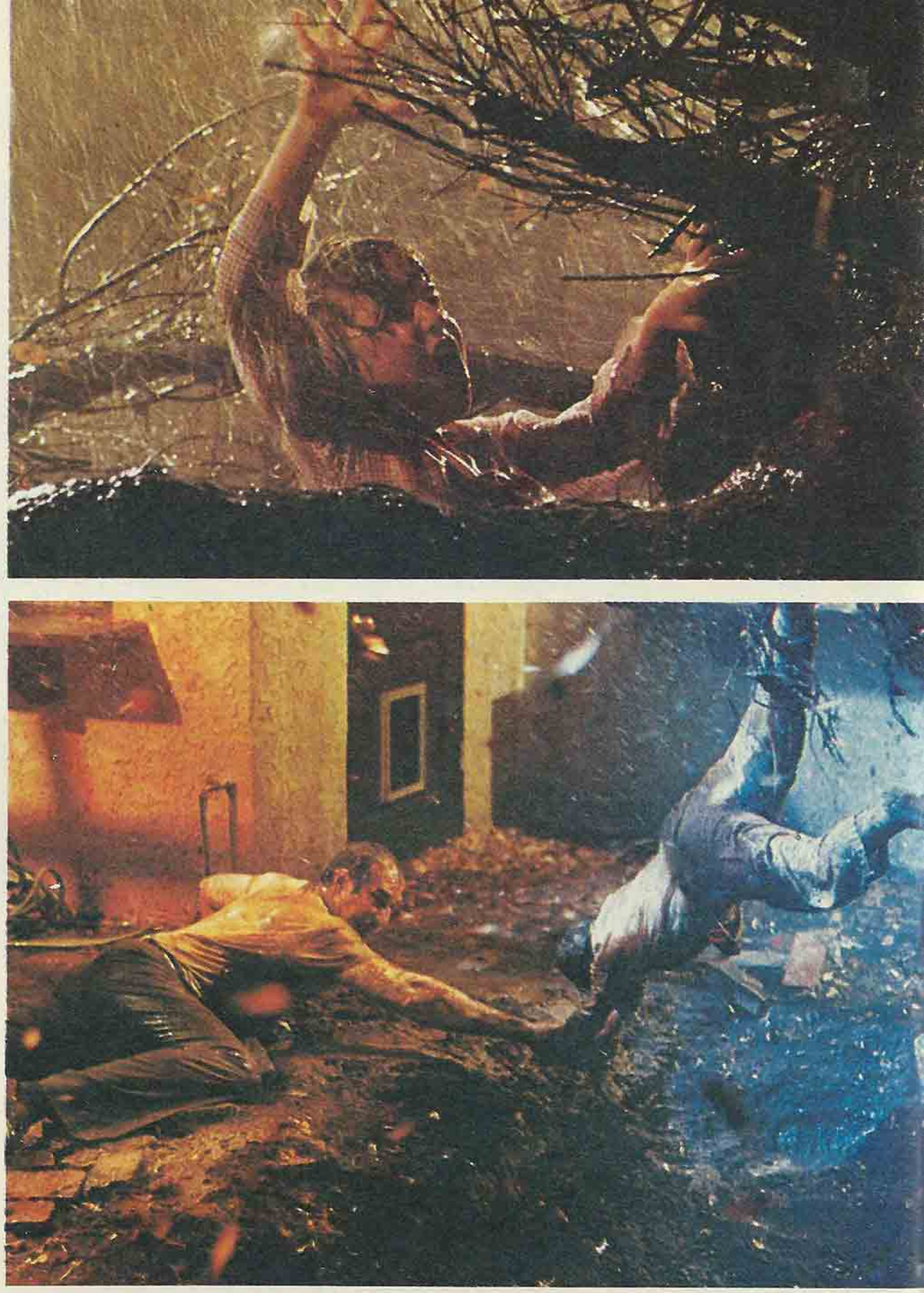
during the making of *Raiders of the Lost Ark,* Marshall recalls. "Just before we went over to Europe to start shooting, discussions started on *Poltergeist.* Steven had always wanted to do a ghost story. So we talked about doing a ghost story that would be allied in approach with *Close Encounters of the Third Kind,* exploring parapsychology and ghost phenomena in the same way that *CE3K* explored UFO phenomena. Steven wrote the treatment while we were working on *Raiders*—I have no idea where he found the time, he must have written it in the car between the hotel and the studio! MGM immediately bought the idea on our return."

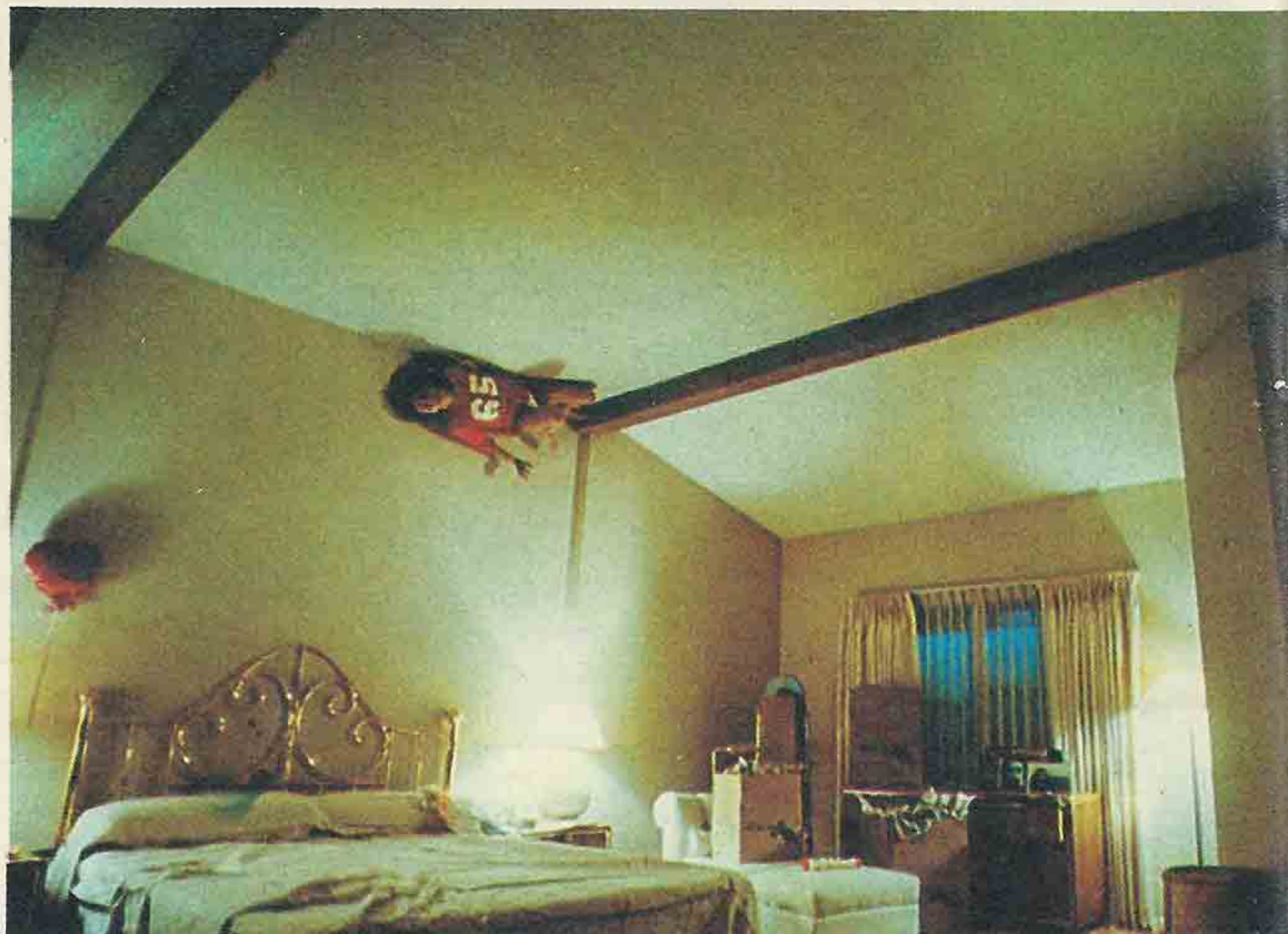
Early in production, word started circulating that Spielberg, not Hooper, was directing *Poltergeist.* "It was a collaborative effort," Marshall explains. "Tobe directed it, while Steve was the guiding force. From the start, it's been Steven's movie—from the idea to the treatment to the script to the design of each storyboard and on from there; and he has closely controlled each aspect of its making. It's a Steven Spielberg production, and he wanted it to be the film that he envisioned."

In the manner of *CE3K, Poltergeist* incorporates a good deal of research in the realm of parapsychology—which brings up the question, does Spielberg actually believe in ghosts and flying saucers? "I think he does; he's had actual experiences of both," Marshall answers. "I tend to believe that such things do occur, there are too many such phenomena that remain unexplained. And there's not only the recorded instances; when you wind up talking to people about ghosts, as we did while putting this picture together, you find that a lot of people you know have had these kinds of experiences. They just never talk about them.

"In terms of the picture, we certainly work with the premise of belief. We're trying to present something that is very real, a story that could happen to anybody. For that reason, Steven decided to set the story within circumstances that are very ordinary, rather than in some old house where something horrible has happened. Rather than let the setting be the movie, he decided that we should do it in a setting that is normal almost to the point where normal becomes abnormal."

The normal setting is the suburban, upper middle class home where Diane





Right, top and center: In the grip of a killer tree! Botton: Dominique Dunne experiences extreme vertigo thanks to a set specially built to allow some of the film's action to occur on the ceiling.

Dick Smith

(Continued from page 43)

ented ones."

In those rare cases when Smith is able to help a letter writer to begin a career, however, the contact between teacher and protege seems to be quite close. Twice during the interview, young makeup artists called up to seek some advice on current projects they are working on. Smith pointed out that both men are recent examples of enthusiasts who the makeup artist was able to introduce into the film business. "They're two extremely talented young men and you will be hearing about them. [As a matter of fact, if you pay attention you will notice that you will be hearing about them in another article in this very issue.] John Caglione went on to an apprenticeship at NBC. He's finished with that now and he's presently doing a lot of character makeup for a Woody Allen film; he also did the Frankenstein makeup for the ill-fated Broadway *Frankenstein* stage production, and he's worked up in Canada recently on a big British production called *Quest for Fire*—he did some nice work on

that, along with a lot of other people. A very talented young man. John was a letter writer who I steered towards the NBC apprenticeship. He was only out of high school, about 19. The other chap is Kevin Haney. Kevin is another brilliant sculptor, a very talented makeup artist. Kevin lived in Chillicothe, Ohio; he sent me pictures that really knocked me out. They have some kind of festival there every year in the summertime, something to do with Indians. Kevin had done all of these foam latex appliance makeups on the actors, all on a voluntary basis, and he had done these marvelous Indian makeups, extensive jobs, a lot of appliances, beautiful stuff. So when I needed extra help on *Altered States* I thought of Kevin and he came here. He lives here now and he's finishing up his apprenticeship at NBC, which I also steered him into, and that's worked out great."

It is possible for a skilled young makeup artist to break into the film business by first catching Smith's attention with a letter and some photographs, but Smith likes to stress how unusual these instances are compared to the number of letters he receives. Next issue he will elaborate on what sort of advice he would give to the majority of young people who contact him and will outline what options are available. He will also explain in detail the horrifying makeup he has created for *Ghost Story* and preview the extraordinary work he is currently engineering for an upcoming monster movie entitled *Death Bite*.

Poltergeist

and Steve Freeling (JoBeth Williams and Craig T. Nelson) live with their three children. As any parapsychologist will tell you, poltergeist phenomena are usually centered around a child in the age range of 5 to 16. In the Freeling household, the weirdness starts when 5-year-old Carol Ann (Heather O'Rourke) is discovered making late-night trips to the family TV set—and she's not watching Carson.

Much of *Poltergeist's* dramatic burden is carried by the youngsters of the Freeling household, and *ET* has an even larger cast of kid actors. Says Marshall, 'Steven's always liked kids, and enjoyed working with them; and a thread that runs through all of his films is that they touch the kid in all of us.

"One of the things that we play on in *Poltergeist* is your childhood fears—fear of the closet, fear of the things under your bed, fear of the tree outside that looks like a person.

"The story develops through three stages," Marshall continues. "It's all very normal at the outset, with a good deal of humor; then there's a series of occurrences that are not necessarily extraordinary—something falls off the wall. Was there an earth tremor? Then things get worse."

Part of what makes things worse is seen on these pages; for instance, Mike Woods provides a good deal of natural fury via his wind machines, and Craig Reardon has completed a number of bizarre makeup creations. Not seen here, but highly visible in the film, is the work of Richard Edlund and the crew of Industrial Light and Magic, who only briefly interrupted their work on *ET* and *Poltergiest* to pick up their third Oscar, for *Raiders*.

"Without ILM, there would be no picture," says Marshall, "and their work on this film has been incredible. They've tried some things that have never been done before, which are turning out very well. And what's made this picture particularly interesting is that the on-set stuff, though it plays a more supportive role, is almost equal in the picture to the visual effects, which serves to make it more realistic."

From the very start, it's been Spielberg's and Marshall's intention to see that *Poltergeist* falls within the boundaries of the PG rating, as determined by the MPAA's rating board, and yet make a truly frightening film. "Ghost stories are for everybody—we all like to be scared," says Marshall, "and, besides that, it's very easy to shock with a slash-and-gore film. The art is very often in what you don't see."

According to Chris Walas, there was a good deal of footage of melting and exploding Nazis in *Raiders* that was never used in the released film. Marshall indicates that Craig Reardon's work for *Poltergeist* will undergo a similar paring-down process to an appropriate level of intensity, "We wanted teenagers to be able to see *Raiders*," Marshall explains, "so we were treading a very fine line, and we're doing the same with *Poltergeist*."

But can a PG film be truly frightening? *Watcher In The Woods* and *The Hearse* certainly weren't, but *Raiders* offers some evidence to the contrary in its climactic scene. *Poltergeist*, however, strives for sustained terror—and both critics and supporters of the rating system agree that the board's decisions can seem a bit whimsical at times. "I know that there's no specific violation of the code in the film," says Marshall. "There's no sex, no swear words, no gratuitous violence. But I imagine that it's possible that it may scare people so badly that they'll think it's too powerful a movie."

Upon the release of *Poltergeist*, Marshall looks forward to a long rest—and maybe one small picture—before *Raiders II* starts preproduction in January. Before wrapping up this interview, we asked Marshall about his infamous alter ego—Dr. Fantasy.

In his guise as Dr. Fantasy, master of T.M. (Total Magic), Marshall amuses and astounds his crews at every wrap party through astounding feats of magic in his own comic style. "I like to think they look forward to it; not just to the end of shooting, that is, but to the magic show," says the good Doctor. One of our informants on the set had given us a rave review of the performance, particularly its climax. "It ends with me doing some sort of fantastic stunt; in this instance it meant falling into a giant cake that had been inscribed 'Thanks from Steven and Frank.' I've done it so many times now, that I tell the baker to use only the cheapest ingredients.

"But I've always felt that you have to go out with a big one at the end of a show!"

INTRODUCING ELVIRA!

In Part 2 Of Our Horror-Host Series, We Bring You The Sensational California Scream Queen.

By Dan Farren

The raven-haired beauty materializes in the foggy doorway. Her tight, black dress clings to her body. As she strikes a provocative pose, you notice her neckline gives new meaning to the word "plunging."

"Who is it?" she asks. "Oh, it's you darling." She begs you to come in.

"After all," she purrs, "I won't bite you and you're bound to have a good time, or my name isn't . . . ELVIRA!"

Week after week most of Southern California tunes into KHJ-TV Ch. 9's *Movie Macabre* and hears that familiar greeting. Twice a week, Saturdays at eight and Sundays at four, Elvira—Mistress of the Dark reclines upon a red velvet couch and hilariously dissects the week's movie. Since her debut in September 1981, she has taken Southern California by storm.

Cassandra Peterson, the beautiful redheaded actress who portrays Elvira, was surprised as everyone when her character became a smash hit.

"I never thought she'd be this popular," she says. "I thought it would be a kiddie's show or something."

While the show is popular with kids, it is the adult viewer who seems to enjoy the gags, sketches, and—oh yes—cleavage. Mix the aforementioned together and you can see why Peterson attributes Elvira's popularity to "sex and humor."

The sex and humor is most evident in one of *Movie Macabre's* most popular segments—SACK TIME WITH ELVIRA. From time to time, Elvira reaches into her mailsack and answers questions from her fans.

"How far do you go on the first date?" wrote one viewer.

"I once went as far as Santa Barbara," replied Elvira.

Often Elvira is plagued by two of her least favorite people—Breather and Kindly Old Pops at the Gate. Breather (John Paragon) is a sweaty, tootsie-pop sucking, crank phone caller with thick glasses. He insists on addressing Elvira as "Elvirus" and once tried to reverse a pair of 3-D glasses so he could come through his TV into her lap. Pops (Tom Maxwell) on the other hand is always trying to make a buck at Elvira's expense. Charging a group of tourists an outrageous sum, the senile old guard tried to pass Elvira off as Yvonne De Carlo.

Guest stars sometimes turn up on the *Movie Macabre* set. When a TV-movie version of Frankenstein aired, Bo Svenson, who played the monster, showed up in character. After watching half the cast devoured in *Beware! The Blob!*, exercise guru Jack LaLanne bounded in to remind Elvira, "You are what eats you!" Frank Zappa's daughter MoonUnit sauntered in as Andrea Wilson—the Valley Girl.

"You know," said Elvira, "I'm a Valley Girl."

"Yeah," squealed Andrea, "Death Valley!"

The films that turn up on *Movie Macabre* aren't what you call classics. Each week films like *The Thing With Two Heads, The House Of Seven Corpses,* and *The Incredible Melting Man* unspool only to be ripped to shreds by Elvira. Anyone who has ever sat through a turkey, howling at a horrible special effect or a bad line of dialogue, will find a kindred spirit in Elvira.

"We know most of the films we air are bad," says Peterson, "it's easier to pull humorous situations out of them."

And how does she feel about horror films.

"Well" she said, "the more I see, the less I like. No, I'm only joking. I like the old horror films, but we stay away from them on *Movie Macabre*. It would be hard to parody the classics, people love them so much."

The past year has been something of a blur for Peterson. Many people would consider her an overnight success. But as it is with many performers, Peterson has been practicing her craft for a while now. A Las Vegas showgirl at 17 , she traveled to Europe to work as a singer and actress. While she was there, she appeared in *Fellini's Roma* for the legendary Italian director. When Peterson returned to the states, she toured in a nightclub act and became a member of The Groundlings, L.A.'s premiere improvisation group.

"I've done a lot of TV work," said Peterson. "*Happy Days, House Calls,* and *Fantasy Island*—usually as a showgirl or a Tina Louise type. I was a saloon girl in the opening credits of *Beyond*

Westworld, and I can be seen in the upcoming *Balboa* series. It's a little bit like *Dynasty* and *Dallas*."

In the movies Peterson can be seen as a maiden in distress in *Cheech and Chong's Next Movie* and as a nurse in the soon - to - be - released *Jekyll and Hyde—Together Again!*

When Peterson went to an audition for Elvira she found a room full of ghouls and other assorted monsters.

"Other girls came in for the test dressed as vampires," she recalls. "One of them even had her teeth capped to look like fangs." Since she was in her street clothes, Peterson figured she wouldn't have a chance at the part. But station manager Walt Baker liked Peterson's timing and comedy experience and made her his first choice for Elvira.

Larry Thomas was cast in the important role of writer-producer-director of *Movie Macabre*. Thomas had the perfect credentials—he had worked with the legendary Larry "Seymour" Vincent, one of L.A.'s most popular horror hosts. Thomas worked with Peterson on the Elvira character. She was to be more vamp than vampire—a little Mae West, a little Vampira, and a lot of Henny Youngman. Peterson describes her witty character as being "new wave" and a *"weird girl* who hangs out in L.A."

"Larry is really responsible for her

Cassandra Peterson, sans Elvira get-up, can be seen on the far left in this scene from the recent Robert Blake picture, *Coast to Coast*.

personality," says Peterson, "and a friend of mine, Robert Redding, designed the dress." The outfit has proved so popular that Fredricks of Hollywood, the world famous lingerie chain, may produce copies of it.

To prepare for each show, Peterson and Thomas screen the upcoming movie and work up 10 comedy spots. These breaks may feature skits, special effects, original music or Elvira just speaking to the audience.

Elvira-mania was at its zenith in May of this year when Channel 9 presented the Vincent Price melodrama, *The Mad Magician* in 3-D. Elvira's segments were also shot in 3-D by a local optical company.

Through special arrangement with 7-11 stores in Southern California, you could buy two pairs of red and blue 3-D glasses for 99 cents. By the day of the broadcast over 2.4 million glasses had been sold. People stood in long lines waiting to purchase their cardboard spectacles. One man was reportedly robbed at gunpoint for his glasses. By the eight o'clock show time many stores were sold out. The glasses were just hard to find—a fact Peterson can attest to.

"I didn't get any glasses," she says. "So I had to go down to 7-11 and wait in line to buy them. While I was standing in line up comes a truck, out jumps a woman with a microphone who begins interviewing me as one of the people in line. When she realized I was Elvira she had an attack. As we approached the counter I bought 10 pairs of glasses and didn't have enough money. The newswoman paid; it was embarrassing."

The 3-D movie proved to be a tremendous ratings success; it was also Elvira's best show. Viewers, in addition to the movie, saw the Mistress of the Dark in her doorway enshrouded in the three dimensional fog and cobwebs. When the Mad Magician turned to the audience and squirted them with water in the movie. Director Thomas cut back to Elvira being hosed down. "I knew 3-D was realistic," gulped Elvira. "But I'm drenched!" Breather and Pops dropped by to plague Elvira and even served as her back-up singers for a musical spot. The record "3-D TV" by Mark Pierson proved to be so popular that Rhino Records has released it as a 12-inch single.

Due to various cable hook-ups and satellite feeds, Elvira is already seen in Detroit, parts of Arizona and for some reason, Guam. Soon the rest of the country will be seeing her in a syndicated show. Peterson has recently appeared as herself on *The Tonight Show* and *Entertainment Tonight*.

"We're in the process of negotiating an Elvira movie" says Peterson, "and maybe another movie as myself."

A 3-D Elvira poster should be in the stores by now, along with T-shirts, buttons and perhaps a make-up kit for Halloween. If the rest of the country catches on to Elvira as fast as Southern California has, then FANGORIA readers can look forward to seeing quite a bit of Cassandra Peterson and her seductive creation.

CREEPSHOW™

A casual chat with Mr. George A. Romero

By Bob Martin

Whatever happened to "The Romero Interview Part Two?" That's a pretty good question, one I've seen rather frequently in the mail, ever since we ran "The Romero Interview Part One" back in issue #13. Well, it will be coming along one of these days. I've interviewed Romero on several occasions since that issue, but not with the careful preparation I hope to do before the "official" part two is written (mainly, I'd like to see a couple of his early films that I have not yet seen).

So this is not it. In fact, this was planned to be a talk with Tom Savini (but who believes our next issue announcements, anyway? I consider that our science fiction section) . . . but Savini's in Japan, of all places, making somebody's face fall apart (we were supposed to meet in NY before he left, but I got tied up, and etc., blah-blah-blah, excuse, excuse; we'll get to Savini just as soon as he's back, OK?). So, since we already had these nifty color photos from *Creepshow*, I was pretty lucky to get hold of Romero for a brief chat, so's we could have an article to go with them.

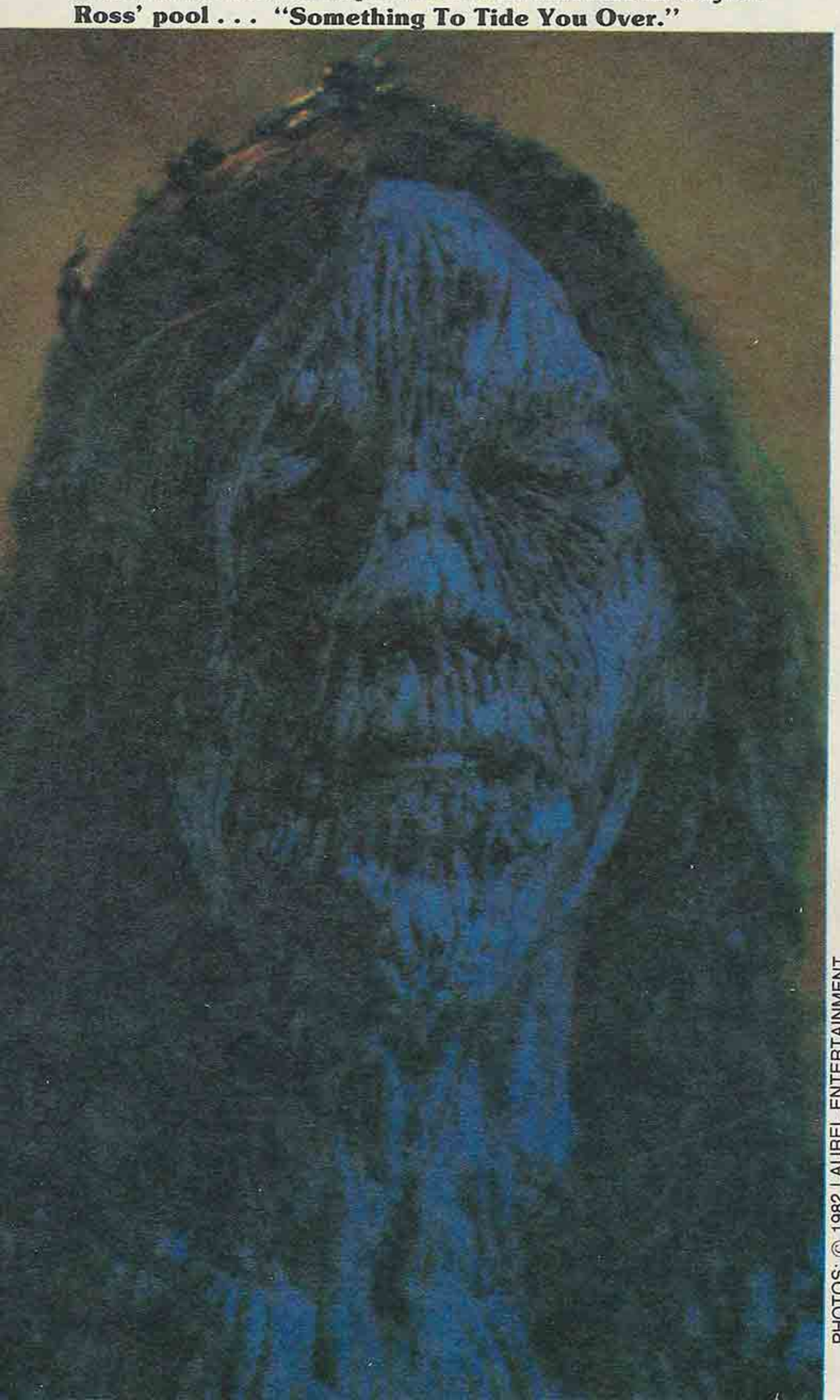
But first, a few words about issue #20 . . . a few of our readers weren't very pleased by the early exposure of certain shock sequences from the movie, two months before its October release. Well, we weren't exactly delighted, either, when we learned that the film, which was originally scheduled for a July release, was to be delayed until October, rendering all of our coverage premature by nearly three months.

Though release delays most often mean troubled films, this was not at all the case with *Creepshow*—in fact, it was quite the opposite. "UFD [the distributor that handled *Dawn of the Dead* and *Knightriders*] liked the film very much," says Romero. "They had theaters booked, billboards up with the date, and were all set to go. But Warner Brothers loved it . . . even though UFD had made all their plans, had it all laid out and ready, I think that UFD came to believe that the film had enough potential that major distribution through Warners would prove to be even more profitable than handling it themselves.

"The reason it got moved back was that Warners wanted to develop their own campaign, test it and so on, Whether the changeover was a good or bad move, that's really up to fate. But what it meant to me was time to do some final editing."

The cutting of *Creepshow* was a rather unusual affair; the first segment to be filmed, "Father's Day," was edited in New York by Michael Spolan while the film continued in production. Later, the rest of the sequences were divided among the four editors: Spolan also cut "They're Creeping Up On

It looks like someone put too much chlorine in Gaylen Ross' pool . . . "Something To Tide You Over."



Dead Nate (that's John Amplas of *Martin*) celebrates "Father's Day" Savini-style.

PHOTOS: © 1982 LAUREL ENTERTAINMENT

You;" Paul Hirsh—who edited *Star Wars* with Marcia Lucas—cut "The Crate;" long-time Romero associate Pat Buba cut the "Jordy Verrill" segment; and Romero himself cut "Something To Tide You Over." We wondered whether this unique arrangement might have left Romero, himself no stranger to the editor's bench, feeling a little "out of touch" with parts of the film. "Not at all," he says. "I was in real close touch with the other cutters; I was watching it progress daily, and with these guys, it was a breeze . . . so I really didn't have that feeling. Though I think I would have that feeling if I were in the circumstance of some guys that I've seen get involved in studio projects, where you're shooting every day, you're lucky if you get a chance to see rushes of a few takes. You get finished, and there's a movie there. *That* would make me feel pretty strange. But this worked out fine."

Though the director couldn't have been more pleased with his editing staff, the film's delay has been a welcome opportunity to "fine tune" the film to a final release version. "The first cut was kind of rushed together," says Romero, "and after I saw it a few times, and got familiar with it, I wanted to make a few cuts. But the July date didn't give me the time to do what I wanted, because of the complications of re-scoring and re-laying tracks. So I had to look only for those places that would allow me to cut without going into all that. When Warners came in, I was able to take the time to do all that—and, as long as we were remixing, we got a chance to do a Dolby track. So, so far, it's all worked in our favor."

Since the screenplay was Stephen King's, Romero's chief contributions to the film are visual. While Romero has always provided solid storylines in his past work, it's the horrific images of his horror films that sticks to the roof of your mind. We wondered whether some of the comic-book-styled visual embellishments might have been improvised in post-production. "The graphics, the colored lights and all of that, were very specifically planned, and spelled out in the shooting script. There were a couple that we couldn't do, because of limited time, or because a scene was already in other ways difficult. So there wasn't really a lot of improvisation there; in fact we were doing tests of various things that could be done on the set, avoiding opticals, about a month before the start of shooting. The page-turns, and the push-overs—the things that we did do optically—weren't exactly improvised either. But we did go into a video studio, right after "Father's Day," with an early cut, transferred to video, and spent a day trying out various things we might do—video makes it so easy, you just sit there at the control panel and do whatever you want. So we did have the advantage of seeing it all tried; then when we went into the optical house, we pretty much knew what we wanted; it just became a matter of how much we could do in the time we had."

At this point, I'd like to take a moment to disagree with myself. Just a few weeks ago, a brief article of *Creepshow* appeared in another magazine under

Yipes! It's Fluffy, the Savini-built star of "The Crate."

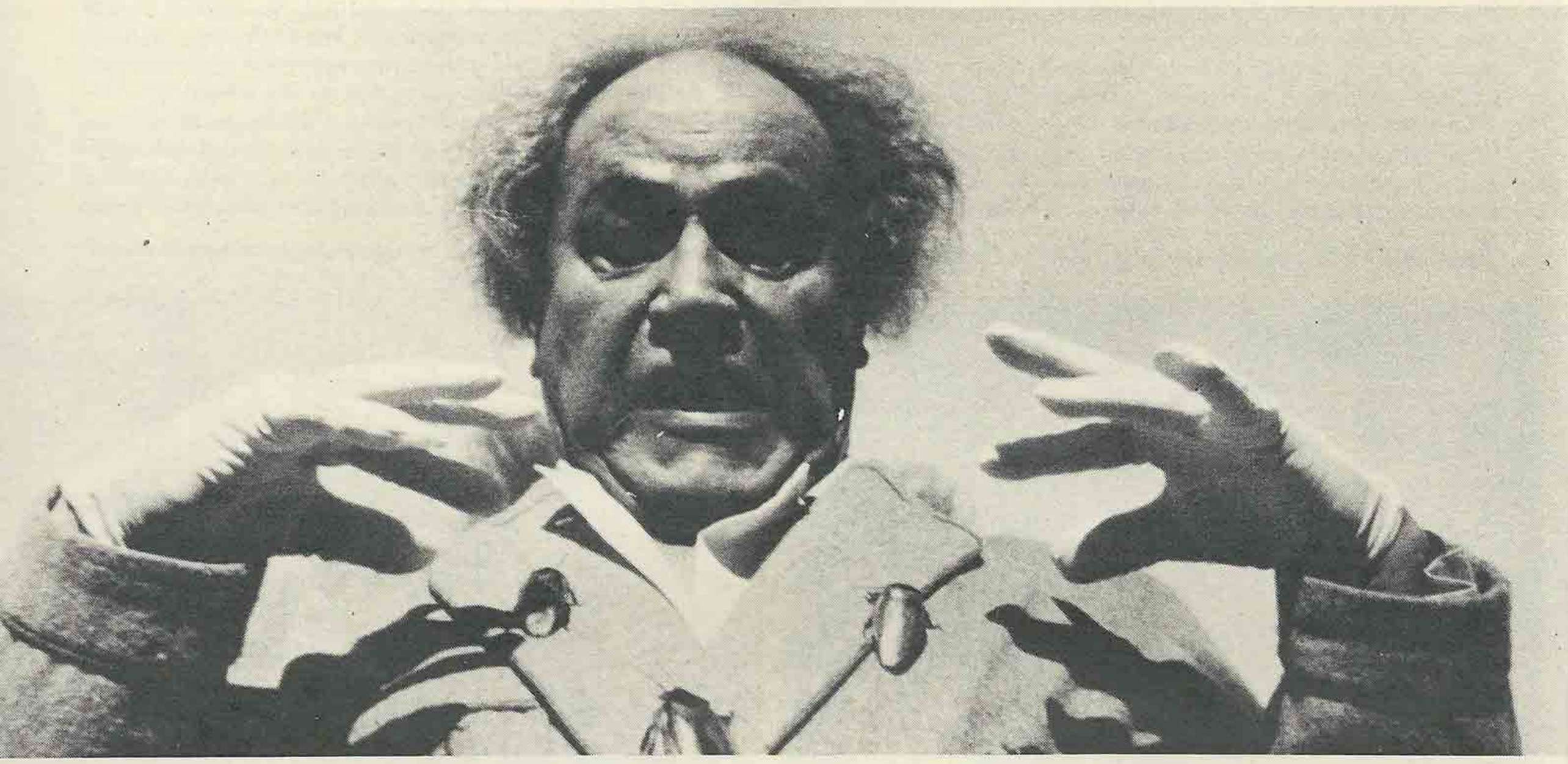
Jordy Verrill (Stephen King) in a life-or-death battle with crabgrass from outer space!

my by-line, and closed with a somewhat derogatory statement about the "lurid violence" of the film. The fact of the matter is, I didn't write that! The last sentence of my article was written by a phantom hand amid that magazine's huge staff of copy editors . . . but I myself have rewritten so much of Fango's copy, I can hardly complain—I can only say, sorry folks, that wasn't me. While offering personal apologies for this passage in my otherwise brilliant article, I wondered what answer Romero would offer to those who find even the stylized, comic-book violence of *Creepshow* objectionable?

"I find that attitude to be objectionable," Romero says, laughing. "What else can you really say but, I don't agree, and the discussion stops there. I don't think there is in any way an excessive amount of violence in the film, and what is there needs to be there for what's happening. But if there is that kind of reaction, I think it may be partly my old reputation rubbing off, partly a sign of the times—like the critical response to *The Thing* that killed it. I liked E.T., but I don't think that it was made in heaven. I don't know Spielberg, but I'm sure he doesn't think that either—like any of the rest of us, you look at your own work, all you see is the faults. But I do think that *E.T.* and the soft-hearted, terminally-cute Spielberg licks of this summer have influenced the critics a lot."

Hopefully, there will be room enough in America's heart for Spielberg's Smurf from Outer Space *and* Dead Nate. And if that proves to be the case, are you ready for Issue #2 of a certain cinematic comic book?

"Steve King and I both feel the same way; and we've made a sort of private pact, that if we get the chance, we will do another one," Romero says. "There are a number of things we'd really love to do, some that would require a little more money . . . if the opportunity presents itself."



Above: FANGORIA cover model E.G. Marshall in "There Creeping Up On You."
Below right: Dead Nates entrance—the best corpse-from-the-grave sequence we've ever seen!
Below left: New Warner Brothers poster art for the movie.

Walter Paisley Lives!

Roger Corman Standby Dick Miller Talks About His Life In The Movies: From Bucket of Blood *to* The Howling.

By David Everitt

What are the two common denominators between such movies as *It Conquered the World, Bucket of Blood, Piranha* and *Rock 'N' Roll High School*? Answer: They are all Roger Corman pictures and they all feature actor Dick Miller. Miller's association with the master exploitation producer began at the very start of Corman's career in 1955 with *Apache Woman,* then continued with Corman's science fiction creature films of the late 50's as well as the producer's Poe pictures of the early 60's. His entertaining character portrayals have also been seen regularly up to the present in such low-budget epics as *The Wild Angels* (1966), *Cannonball* (1976) and *Hollywood Boulevard* (1977).

Miller participated in the whirlwind production of *War of the Satellites* (1958) which Corman managed to slip into the theaters a mere two months after the Sputnik went into orbit; he was, along with Jack Nicholson and Boris Karloff, a part of the now legendary exercise in throwaway filmmaking known as *The Terror* (1963); and he was able to put his great comic skills to use in Corman's ever-popular horror spoofs, *Bucket of Blood* (1959) and *Little Shop of Horrors* (1960). In the 70's, during the second generation of Corman's low-budget empire, Miller's talents were employed by Corman protege Joe Dante, first in *Hollywood Boulevard* and most recently in *The Howling* in which Miller plays the offbeat occult bookshop owner who tips off the heroes to the *real* legend of werewolves. In all, Miller estimates he has made between 85 and 90 pictures.

As a young man growing up in the Bronx, Manhattan and Long Island—"no Brooklyn"—Miller's first love was music, not movies. He entered the acting profession in a roundabout fashion; in fact, he says that his decision to become a thespian was influenced by the fact that the entries in a Veteran's Administration booklet were listed alphabetically. After coming out of the Navy, he used up his government allotment and decided he would be best off going to school on his GI bill. He had heard that upholsterers were making good money, so he referred to his V.A. booklet and found the listing for the New York School of Upholstery.

PHOTO: © 1959 A.I.P.

As the mental-retard hero Walter Paisley, Dick Miller wins the adulation of beatnik connoisseurs with his incredibly "life-like" sculpture in *Bucket of Blood*.

Since he had things to do at night and had to sleep late, he asked someone at this school whether there were any late classes. He was told the only class was at eight o'clock in the morning. Not pleased with this, he looked in his booklet again and found that the next listing was the New York Theater School of Dramatic Arts. He called up the school, found out that their classes were at 10 and said, "Fine, I'm coming down."

After doing some Broadway shows and a lot of early, live television, he moved out to Hollywood, now determined to be a writer. Miller says, "I sat for about two years—didn't make a nickel. A friend of mine introduced me to Roger Corman. He had just made his first picture and they were about to make another—so I said 'I'm an actor!' "

PHOTO: © 1955 A.I.P.

Miller the bartender watches Peggie Castle prove her manhood in the 1955 Corman quickie, *Oklahoma Woman*.

Fang: What were your first impressions of Roger Corman?

Miller: Roger at the time was only two or three years older than me. I was 24 and Roger was 27, and he was already making movies and I thought that's kind of nice. We hit it off as friends, except he was the boss. It was just a natural course of events after that; he'd say he's making another picture and he'd like me to be in that one. To me it was all a lark. Here it is 30 years later and it's still a game. I love it.

Fang: What sort of shooting schedule did you have on your first movie with Corman?

Miller: I think *Apaché Woman* was done in seven or eight shooting days. And that seemed fair to me. You know, we go out, we work all day from sunup to sundown and it worked out fine. Not having made a picture before, I figured this was the way you made movies. I remember we made a picture a little while later and Roger said we were going to shoot this and it was going to take two weeks. I thought, Jesus, what're we going to do with all the time? It seemed monstrous. It was like stepping stones. Every time I got an extra day on a picture, I'd say, "This is fantastic! We're going to take 10 days to shoot this picture!"

Fang: I've heard that on Corman's early pictures, everyone had a great deal of responsibility due to the lack of money and personnel. Did you have other duties other than acting on those movies in the 50's?

Miller: I think on *Apache Woman*—this is not for publication unless you can clean it up—I remember the horses were running through the street and they all took a shit. Everybody grabbed shovels and someone said, "That's your job, every time they . . ." I said, "Get outa here! I'm walking off the picture! I'm not going to shovel shit!" [laughs] But after that I don't think there was ever a matter of doubling up on anything. Of course, you did things you didn't know you were supposed to do or not do. They were non-union pictures so everybody would clear the set, re-do the set, and . . . well, doing your own stunts was almost mandatory. Roger'd say, "Well, you're going to come down here on your horse and you get shot, fall off the horse and go off the cliff." You'd say, "Sure, fine, let's do it." And you did it. You didn't think twice.

Fang: Were you ever injured doing those stunts?

Miller: I would say in the first five, six years I did stunts on every picture: fights and sometimes major stunts too. And I didn't get hurt. I got hurt later on, when things relaxed . . . One time though I broke an ankle, on *It Conquered the World*. I was a GI fighting a . . . it looked like an upside-down ice-cream-cone monster.

Fang: The carrot creature.

Miller: Yeah, the big carrot. And the carrot attacked us. I kept yelling, "Fire and fall back!" There was some extra behind me with a bayonet on the end of his rifle and every time I stepped back he hit me with that bayonet. About the third or fourth take, I real-

PHOTO: © 1958 ALLIED ARTISTS

In addition to shortness, Miller suffers a vicious neck-lock in *War of the Satellites*.

ized the bayonet was under my helmet, instinctively, I didn't see it, I just felt it. As I stepped back, sure enough, it hooked my helmet from underneath and I had taken a funny step to get out of the way because I just instinctively knew something was wrong and I broke my ankle doing it. If I hadn't, I probably would've gotten the bayonet through my head. I remember they kept shooting. [laughs] They'd stand me on one leg and push me past the camera. So they got closeups of me moving past the camera; when you looked at it, it looked like a big arch: I started at the bottom, went to the top, went to the bottom again. Couldn't use it.

Fang: In science fiction quickies from the 50's like *It Conquered the World* and *War of the Satellites* were there many technical mishaps when dealing with special effects?

Miller: In *War of the Satellites,* I don't know what kind of technical errors we had, but we had two of the best lounge chairs money could buy to take off for the moon in. The type where you hit the sides and the chair slides down into a lying-down position. At the time, they looked pretty good, except they really looked like lounge chairs. We had a lot of fun on those. I remember for the hallways on the spaceship in *War of the Satellites* we had four arches, that's all they were, the entire set was arches. You could set them close together to make a short hall or set them further apart and make a long hall. At the end of the hall was a flat—you made a turn. So on our spaceship you always ran down to the end of the hall and made a turn. That was the entire ship.

Fang: In order to get *War of the Satellites* out two months after Sputnik, was the schedule any more hectic than usual for that period?

Miller: No, we probably had a nice 10-day schedule on that. A leisurely pace. Actually, the schedules always worked out. They weren't unbelievable hours. They were long days but we didn't work late into the night. That had to do with Roger's knack for making these pictures. His competition at the time were people like Sam Katzman [*Don't Knock the Rock, The Zombies of Mora Tau, The Giant Claw*] and I think what made Katzman's pictures what they were was that he did a 10-day low-budget film and it looked like a 10-day low-budget film. Roger would shoot the same movie and he knew up front that the script wouldn't cost anything—that's talent, that's on paper. And if you hand-picked the actors and made sure they knew what they were doing, you could save a lot of time by getting everything in one take. My reputation for a long time was that I never blew a scene. Everything was one take. Two takes meant the camera went bad.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE DANTE

The original Walter falls in love with one of his clay-on-flesh masterpieces in *Bucket of Blood.*

That's how Roger saved; the people he had working for him were very talented. You look at those pictures, the reason why these people went on to become stars was that they had that quality to start with. People who worked in Katzman's films, you never heard from them again. Because that's the way he picked them—you make a cheap picture, get a cheap actor. Roger never thought that way. Roger figured there were young people in this business who are talented, so let's use them.

Fang: Corman must have also been very good at keeping people interested and on their toes.

Miller: You didn't have much time to sit down [laughs] "Don't leave the set" was the standing order, "You're going to work again in three seconds." The set-ups were great. On the last shot on a set, you would hear Roger yell cut, and as you turned he'd be walking, he'd be 25, 30 yards away already, going to the next set-up. While you were shooting the last set-up, if it looked like it was going to work, he'd have people moving, everybody was setting up at the next location.

Fang: All through your career you've played a lot of funny characters. Do you remember the first time you got to do comedy?

Miller: Well, the concept for *Bucket of Blood* was that it was the first black comedy of modern times, which I think it was, but it wasn't the concept when they first started making it. We started talking about it and the humor that came into it was something that I had always had. I would play gangsters, in movies like *Naked Paradise,* and get laughs. I always maintain that people have these facets about them anyway, no matter what the part is, there is humor in certain people. I think when playing tough guys or killers, humor creeps into it, because they're people from the streets and that's how they survive. I'm doing that sort of thing now, in *General Hospital*. They brought me in to play a sleazy desk clerk in a hotel. And I started getting laughs right away. This wasn't the image I projected as a young man. I was the exact opposite. I was tough looking, very streetwise looking. I did *War of the Satellites* as a young scientist and it didn't sit too well. It was a real, quote/unquote, leading-man type, and I was a foot too short for the part.

Fang: I remember you played a humorous vacuum cleaner salesman in *Not of This Earth* (1957).

Miller: Yeah, you know, you just hit it. *Not of This Earth* was the first time. Roger said come on down and wear a striped suit with a bow tie and a lot of pencils in your pocket—you're a

PHOTO: © 1963 A.I.P.

Beaten by Boris Karloff, Miller tries desperately to find his way in *The Terror*'s Castle Without a Plot.

salesman. I had sold pots and pans in the Bronx and in the Bronx I had worn a black shirt and a white tie; I dressed like I had always dressed. So I came down like that. Roger said, "That's wrong." I said, "No, this is right, this is the character." We argued about it. I said, "If you don't like the take, I'll run home and get another suit, I'll get a bow tie, whatever you want, but let me do one take this way." And I ad-libbed all that dialogue about "Crazy, man . . ." and all that other stuff. This was the character as I saw it. He said, "I wanted a salesman who comes and gets killed." I said, "So I'm a salesman!"

Fang: Playing Walter Paisley in *Bucket of Blood* must have been fun after doing so many straight thrillers.

Miller: *Bucket of Blood* is my favorite film. They said, "How're you going to play this thing?" It was my concept that the guy should be kind of a mental retard. They had been doing crazy killers before and they wanted something deep and psychological. I said, "No, this is not a crazy killer," this was somebody who I wanted to be an innocent. Everything stemmed from that, all the little things that were put into it, the character quirks and so forth.

Fang: How many times have you played Walter Paisley?

Miller: Walter Paisley lives, yeah. [laughs] I think four times. There was *Bucket of Blood* and then when they did *Hollywood Boulevard* the idea of using Walter Paisley was Joe Dante's. He said, "We're going to use the name again." I said, "That's fantastic, but it's not the same character," and he said, "No, just the name. It'll be an inside joke," which is what he did in *The Howling* with all the directors' names he kept giving to characters. And then when we did *The Howling*, the character who owned the shop had another name and he said, "Let's call him Walter Paisley again." When I did *Heartbeeps*, Alan Arkush changed my character's name to Walter, so it's been four times.

Fang: I thought Vurson Fouch, your flower-eater character in *Little Shop of Horrors*, was just as funny. Was there much ad-libbing on that picture?

Miller: Yes, just about the entire thing. I think practically everything Mel Welles and I did was ad-libbed. We had basic lines, but the things with the names were all ad-libbed. You know, "What's your name, Mr. Yellow Vest?" he said, and when I said Vurson Fouch—Vurson Fouch means nothing—and he said his name, Gravis Mushnik, and I said, "Oh, that's a good one." It was like we were playing a game, on camera, which was something Mel and I would do in real life. We hung out quite a bit with each other in those days and this type of humor was something we would be doing all day long.

Fang: Was there a full script?

Miller: There was a full script; it was skeletal but it had enough dialogue to cover the scenes and the writer Chuck Griffith has his own inimitable sense of humor.

Fang: Was the name Mrs. Shiva an ad-lib?

Miller: No, Chuck had gotten on this kick; Chuck Griffith is not Jewish and Mel Welles is and Mel was always giving Chuck these Jewish lines, Jewish expressions. Shiva is something when Jewish people sit after somebody dies . . . Are you Jewish?

Fang: Half.

Miller: Oh okay, then you're following the humor. But Chuck didn't have any of this in him, naturally, but he got it through his associations with Mel and myself and from everybody else he knew, and we were trying to educate him. Actually, the picture was panned as anti-semitic when it first came out. There were some reviewers who said that there was an anti-semitic character named Mrs. Shiva in it who spoke with a thick Jewish accent and the picture was very anti-semitic and so on. And we laughed hysterically. We would have liked to see the reviewer and let him come here and talk to Mel and myself—we'd drive him crazy.

Fang: It's just Jewish humor, really.

Miller: Yeah, it was very funny. But Roger worried about it. I remember he said, "Are we in trouble?" And I said, "Take it from me, Roger, the picture is a funny picture and there's nothing anti-semitic about it." It's what you just said, it's Jewish humor. He said, "Will it go? Am I going to *lose money?*" Who knew at the time it was going to run 20 years without ever stopping? There was some talk, I don't know whether this is premature or outdated or what, but Chuck Griffith for years has always said he was going to make *Little Shop of Horrors II*. It might be something he's always been working on and never got any further with. I don't think it could be done again, personally. I discussed this with Jonathan Haze at one time and we seemed to arrive at the conclusion that the humor of the picture had to do with the way it was made and the time it was made. Even if you wrote the funniest script in the world it wouldn't recreate the era, and aura, of what those people put down then. Even the same people wouldn't come up with the same thing now. Things have changed in their lives.

Fang: On *The Terror*, what was it like

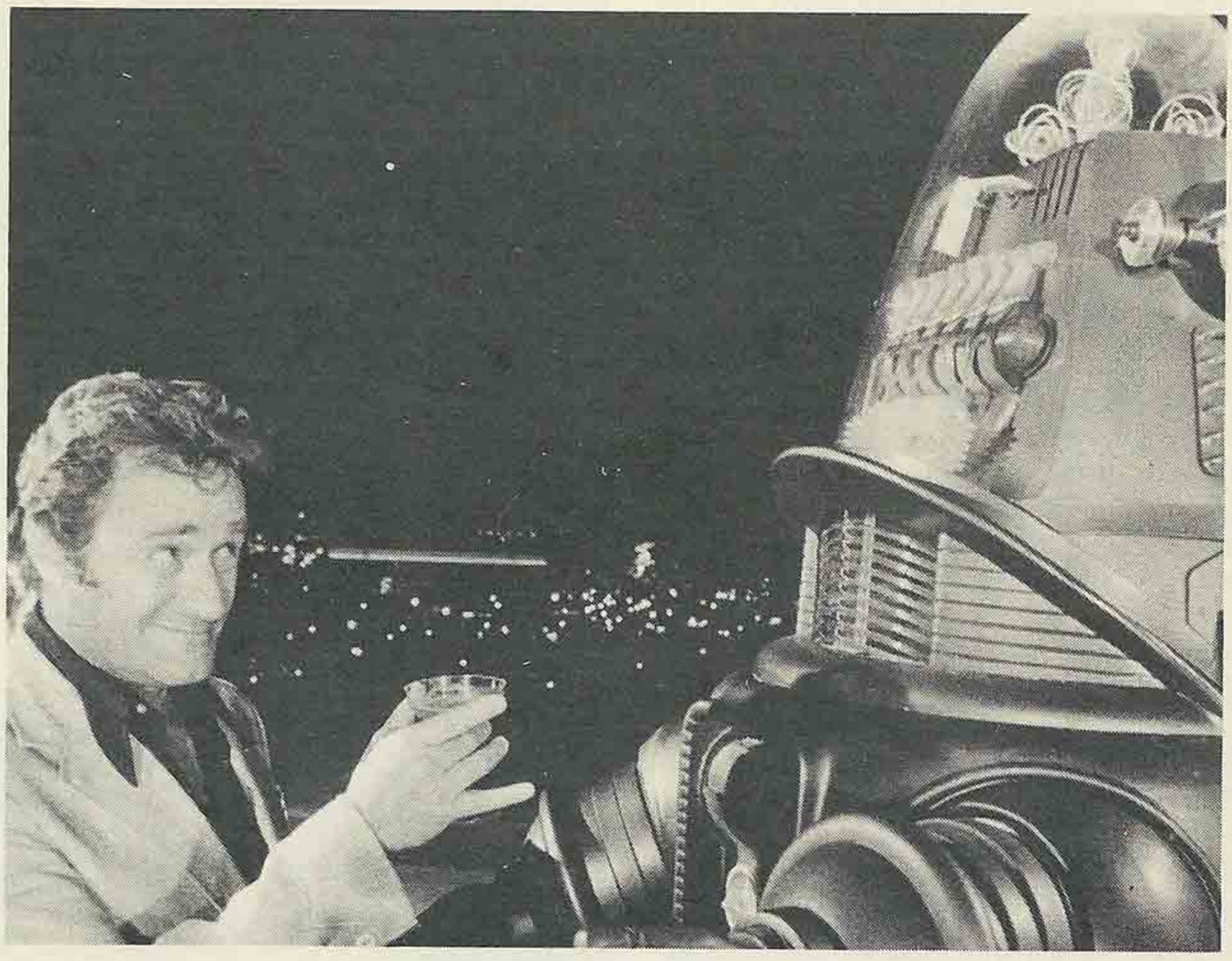


PHOTO: © 1976 NEW WORLD PICTURES

Miller toasts Robby the Robot in one of his most enjoyable roles as the seedy agent in *Hollywood Boulevard*.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOE DANTE

Walter Paisley, now an occult bookshop owner, looks on as Joe Dante, center, directs a scene from *The Howling*.

working on a movie with absolutely no plot?

Miller: Well, just to recap what other people have said, Roger had just finished doing *The Raven,* and they still had the set. They had finished shooting on Friday and they were going to tear the sets down. So Roger said, "Leave the set up and come back and do it on Monday," [laughs] like he was doing them a favor. "Why work over the weekend," he said. And he signed Karloff for the three days and he had all this set up and he called Chuck Griffith and said, "Write me a bunch of scenes for Boris Karloff and this castle." Chuck said, "What's the story?" Roger said, "No story, just a lot of castle, you know, in and out of doors, very mysterioso." And that's exactly what he did. We came and shot over the weekend and he said goodbye. About three months later, when things slowed down, Chuck had a chance to write a script around what had been shot. We got a call: we were going to make a movie. I had forgotten all about it, literally.

Fang: Did you know where you were going in that story at any time?

Miller: At the time we were shooting? No. When we were shooting in the castle, none of it made any sense. Some of the things I did were ridiculous because I was a butler and I was there just for Karloff to talk to, for Jack to talk to, just a butler. Then in the rewrite I became the heavy. Now all these scenes were played with different dimensions with fantastic character changes. So this came out at different levels, as well as my hair length and body weight. I was walking in and out of doors changing 20 pounds during this picture. And because the one part was shot in the winter and the other in the summer, my color would change. I would leave the castle white, come into the sunlight and I was practically black, really suntanned. And my hair was a different length; my sideburns were moving up and down. It was a wild thing.

Fang: What was Jack Nicholson like to work with in those days?

Miller: Jack was great. Jack and I were buddies off screen, I think from the day we met. We were beach buddies, party buddies, everything.

Fang: Do you still keep in touch with him?

Miller: No, I did for a couple of years after he made it but there's a line of demarcation that comes up. It's not the difference between an actor who doesn't make money and an actor who makes, say, a hundred or two hundred thousand a year—you can still communicate. But when a guy starts making 10 million a year, the money actually separates you, because there's no way I can participate in his level of life with "Hey, let's fly to Europe" and that sort of thing. Perforce, it became necessary for us to stop seeing each other. The only way you can hang around with a person like that is as a subservient, like a coffee boy or something. You can't really be equals at that level. I love Jack and I think his feelings about me are about the same. The few times we've run into each other the last four or five years we have been very close, but it just doesn't suit a social life between us.

Fang: In the past few years you've made some pictures with Joe Dante. What do you think of him as a director?

Miller: Joe Dante is one of the better young directors around today. He's certainly one of the quietest and I think that makes a good director. There's not a lot of yelling and screaming on his set. He says, "That's fine. That's fine." He's set it up so well up front that he knows exactly what he wants. I appreciate that. I think his movie *The Howling* was very good. I don't know what happened, those people were ridiculous for not pushing it further. There's a new Academy Award this year for makeup. *American Werewolf* and *Heartbeeps* were nominated and neither one is close to *The Howling* for makeup. As a joke, I had said to Joe something about maybe we can get some money and push for an Academy Award for me for supporting player, it was a nice part. And Joe said, "They won't do anything about it. They're finished with it; the picture's been released, they made a lot of money, it's been sold to TV and that's the end of it." And I really couldn't believe it. They really had a chance with this picture for makeup. Joe said something about it being a non-union picture and the Academy really frowns on that. Maybe that's it.

Fang: What upcoming movies will we be seeing you in?

Miller: There's two that are in the can right now. *National Lampoon Goes To the Movies,* which was meant to be another *Animal House* and for some reason they had some trouble with it and they did not release it. And a picture called *White Dog* [see Fango #17]. I just had a small part in there but it was fun and games. It was a very interesting picture to do. I liked the story, but they may have trouble with it. And I'm into TV now. I've been doing comedies. I did *Police Squad!*, with the people who did *Airplane!* Joe Dante did the first and second episodes, and the last one, which I worked in. I'm also working in *General Hospital* which is the big surprise of my career. It's become a running part and I've had people stop me after the first or second show and they say "You're from *General Hospital.*" I'll be appearing on that late in March and the beginning of April.

Fang: We'll be watching for you.

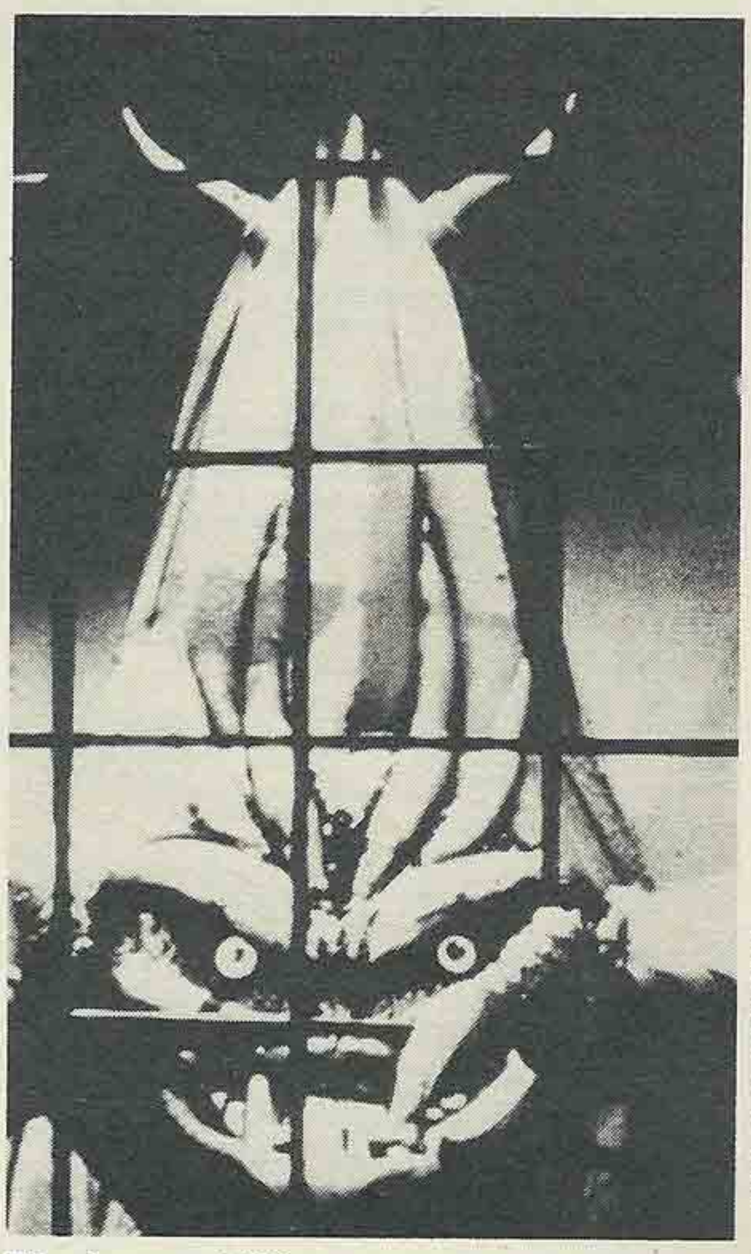


PHOTO: © 1956 A.I.P.

The bone-chilling carrot creature, Miller's co-star in Corman's *It Conquered the World.*

Parasite

A Talk With Producer-Director Charles Band About His Current 3D Horror Release.

by David Everitt

"The research I had done on 3D during preproduction was very negative," reports Charles Band, producer-director of *Parasite*. "No one wanted to hear about it; they thought it was not really a help. Some distributors I talked to pointed out all the difficulties with projection lenses and the glasses, and about how 3D had died in the 50's and that I shouldn't fool with it. Then, after we got into preproduction, *Comin' At Ya* opened and it was a success and it ignited 3D fever. All of a sudden I wasn't making the wrong decision, I had made the right one. The tide had turned."

As of this writing, two weeks after its opening in the New York area, *Parasite*, the story of a scientific experiment gone haywire, has quickly taken its place among the leaders on Variety's recent top-grossing movies. If this regional opening is a reliable indication, Band's gamble with 3D looks like it will pay off when *Parasite* opens in other areas in the country throughout the spring and summer.

PHOTOS: © 1982 EMBASSY PICTURES

Scientist Robert Glaudini defends himself against one of the Rayguns gang with a well placed pipe through the intestines.

Bands says that his decision to film his futuristic creature picture in three dimensions came about by accident. "I had just finished a film called *The Alchemist* which is still in post-production," the 30-year-old independent recalls. "I had collaborated with a writer by the name of Alan Adler, and Alan and I, along with one of our actors Robert Glaudini, sat down and talked about a project that I already had some thoughts about. It was set in the 1990's, with a bleak vision of the future that I thought would be fun to have in a sci-fi film. Alan had some writers who had approached him with a project called *Parasite* which in its original form did not really resemble what we finally made but it was a seed. We started throwing ideas back and forth and not too far after that we all collaborated on a script. When we were putting the financing together—at that point we were doing it through my film company and my video company, Wizard Video—I met a fellow by the name of Randall Larsen, who had worked in the past with Chris Condon's Stereovision 3D and had done some work on *Comin' At Ya*. Randy and I spent an afternoon together on something totally unrelated, and he started telling me about 3D. And he sold me on it."

Despite gloomy reports from people in the industry, Band persisted in his conviction that 3D could prove to be a profitable enterprise. He says, "I felt, at the worst, I could always release the film flat. It did not have to be in 3D, the process would only be an added ingredient. So I decided to go forward and we started to plan. We actually rewrote the script to some extent for 3D effect."

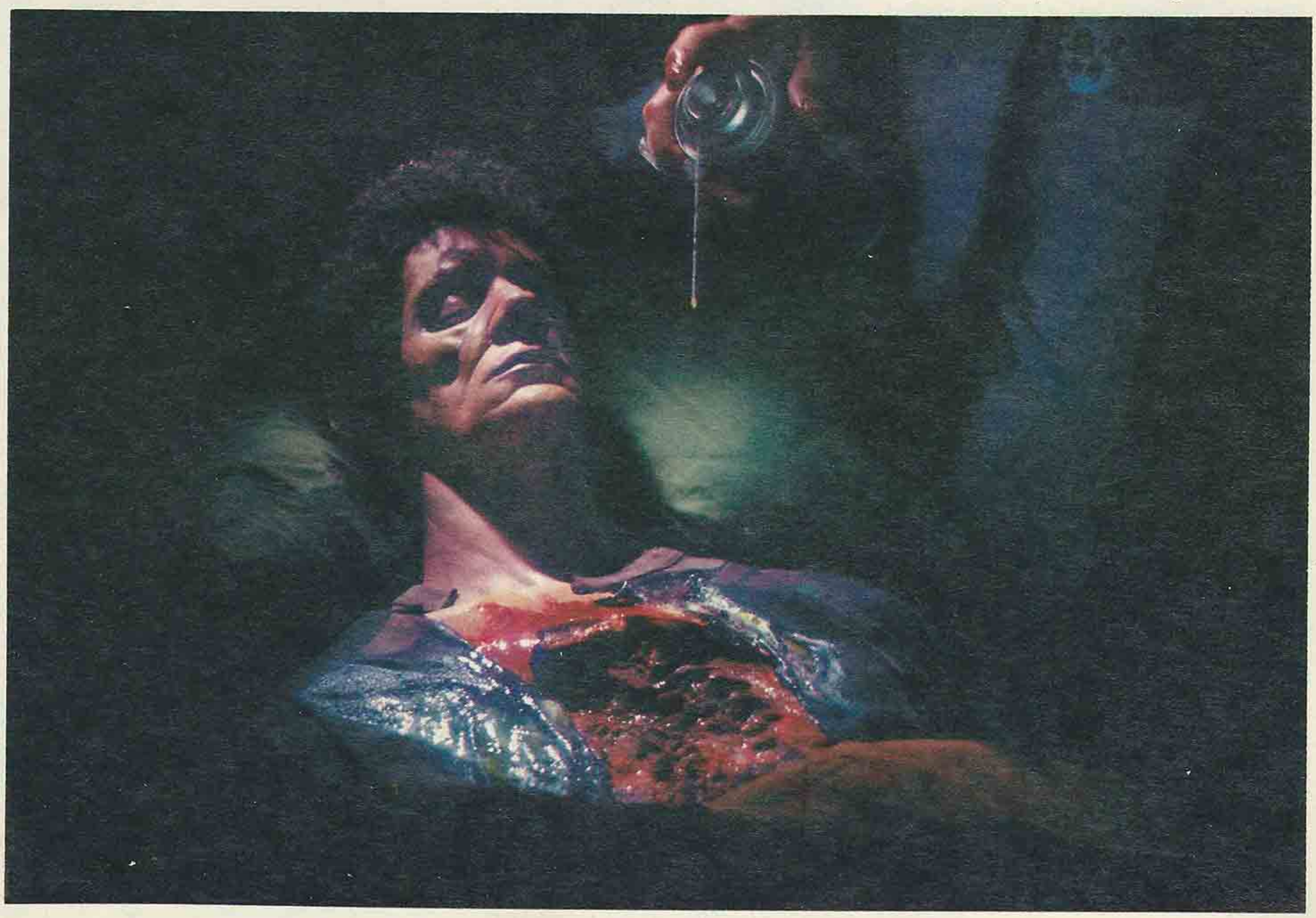
Like Earl Owensby, the producer of *Rottweiler*, Band opted for the single-camera Stereovision 3D system. Once more, Band's decision was instinctive. When asked if he was considering other alternative systems at the time, he replies, "I've got to tell you I really wasn't. I had talked to other people who had used alternative systems and shot experimental footage with them, and I spoke to a friend who does some

work for some of the studios, and the feedback was that they were all pretty shaky and they all had problems and I could very well be involved with the best one. I just felt right about the system. I hadn't even tested it at the time. The footage I had seen was very impressive but we didn't actually go out and start testing till about two weeks before shooting. As a result of that test we had to push the shoot back around one week just to put three or four tests behind us. We finally got all the kinks out of it."

The kinks were many since the technology for this particular system is still under development, but Band says, "I'm pleased with what we wound up with." Along with Randall Larsen, who acted as 3D consultant on the picture, Band credits cinematographer Mac Ahlberg (who had previously worked on *The Seduction* and *Hell Night)* for his invaluable assistance in conquering the three dimensional problems.

Some of the problems were intensified by the use of some unusual camera techniques. "I moved the camera around a lot," reports Band, "and I did something which I don't think anyone else has done yet in 30, I shot two or three sequences with a hand-held camera. That was a little risky, especially when we shot the first sequence; it could have been a total waste. But it all worked very well." Additional modifications had to be made to accommodate the Stereovision system in the area of costuming and makeup. "We learned that when doing makeup in 3D, for example, it helped for the most part to go a little heavier than usual. In one case, there was a character with a scar, a black man played by a man named Al Fann, and it was important for a story point that you see the scar and, in 3D, that was tough. The makeup for the scar had to be accented in order to be picked up by the camera."

The area of special makeup effects was perhaps just as important as the 3D aspect of the picture. The Parasite itself is the real star of the movie and to create this hideous creature Band employed the superb talents of Makeup Oscar nominee Stan Winston and his team, which consisted of James Kagel and Lance Anderson. In the early stages, Band provided some input for the original design of the monster. He was concerned, for the most part, with the overall impression the creature would make. "I was looking for something very organic, something that at first glance would make you say to yourself, 'Where have I seen this thing before? Where does this thing come from?' Something vaguely recognizable. I didn't want it to be a far-out, fabricated monster. I think due to the expertise of Stan and his team, we wound up with a very real-looking creature.



"The Parasite is a puppet, though Stan doesn't like to use that word, because it's a lot more than a puppet. Three or four people at all times have to operate it, with pulleys and levers. All the effects scenes with the Parasite were tough to work with; a large bulk of our short schedule had to be devoted to those five or six scenes."

Although *Parasite* looks like it may be Band's first nation-wide horror hit, he is already, at the age of 30, a seasoned veteran in the field with 13 films to his credit. Born into a movie-business family, his filmmaking ambitions started very early; as he puts it, "My ambitions were there basically when I could walk. I grew up on motion picture sets." Band spent his growing years in Rome where his father, Albert Band, was producing and directing a string of genre pictures, ranging from Steve Reeves epics to such Italian Westerns as *A Minute to Pray . . . A Second to Die*. As soon as Band was old enough to work, his father trained him in just about every facet of moviemaking, so that by the time he was 21, Band had enough know-how to produce his first picture, a horror thriller called *Mansion of the Doomed*. Since then he has concentrated on the horror-sci fi field with such features as *Laserblast, End of the World* and *Tourist Trap*. Band has always been in touch with this genre: "I'm a fan myself. When these movies come out—good, bad or indifferent—I'm there."

In addition to independent producing, Band has also been very active in the video cassette business. His first video cassette company was called Meda, named after his wife, which eventually became known as Media Home Entertainment, an organization that specializes in independent features. Media Home Entertainment established itself in the video field with the tremendously successful distribution of John Carpenter's *Halloween*. After a falling out with his partners, Band then formed his present organization, Wizard Video. In the past this company has unleashed such terror epics as *Zombie, The Boogey Man* and *I Spit On Your Grave*. Band feels that his present video hit, the much sought after *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, will do for Wizard what *Halloween* did for Media Home Entertainment.

As a result of the success of *Chainsaw* (which, as of this writing, has reached number six on *Billboard*'s top-40 chart), Band now finds that he is able to acquire "a number of other films that I've been looking for for two years, which are now coming out of the woodwork." One such picture is the punk-gore-cult item *Driller Killer*, which will command a certain amount of attention from die-hard horror fans, but not nearly as much as two other recent acquisitions—none other than two seminal classics by the Godfather of Gore himself, Herschell Gordon Lewis. Band says he will be releasing both *Blood Feast* and *2,000 Maniacs* in December.

While *Parasite* continues to cover the country in its regional release pattern, Band is beginning his next project, another horror picture entitled *Crimson* which he will be making in collaboration with Stan Winston.

Previous Page, Top: In one of the picture's big 3D effects scenes, blood drips from this victim's stomach, down the pipe, and into the audience.

Previous Page, Bottom: Casualty makeup effects show the disastrous results of the Parasite's exit through the chest.

Right Above: One of the Rayguns grows attached to a slithering Stan Wilston creation.

Right: Winston's makeup effects team also provided this stomach swollen by internal paraside activity.

Bottin

(Continued from Page 12)

syrup." Bottin does shave a stance on gore, or rather, a philosophy, as most special makeup effects artists do. "I very honestly think that graphic violence in some movies is all right, but only when it's being done to the villain. See, in most of these Slice 'Em 'n' Dice 'em/ Popiel's Vegamatic Killer movies, it's always an innocent person that's getting carved up. I think it should be made clear to the audience that the victim deserves it." He feels that it isn't good to make movies that revolve around atrocities, "because people feel cheated," he says. "It not only offends their senses, but they've already seen it."

As far as monster-type frights are concerned, Bottin doesn't feel that the monster, per se, is scary. "The *story* is scary, and then the monster is just the period at the end of the sentence (or exclamation point, as the case may be). In other words, if *The Thing* is scary, it's not the monsters that are scary, it's the way John builds suspense." Bottin points out that in broad daylight, monsters are just so much latex foam. "If someone comes over to my house," he explains, "and they walk into the front room and see a finished monster sitting there, they don't jump out of their skin, they go, 'Oh neat,' and take a good look at it. But, if it's put in the right place in the movie, and in the right light; and if it pops out at the right moment, then—hey, you can't beat that for a scare."

It is impossible to say just what Bottin's next project might be. He still hasn't made up his mind, and probably won't until after the verdict is in on *The Thing*. A student of the John Carpenter/Joe Dante school of filmmaking, Rob has learned a tremendous amount from his mentors, and is looking forward to putting on a director's hat. He has been offered the directing duties on two pictures, both of which are of the horror genre, and which have "medium to low" budgets (an aspect he likes); but he is cautious about making too hasty a decision. Says Bottin, "I want to be very careful with what I do, because I don't want to jeopardize my carreer-change by ill-planning. It's a very important step in my life, and I want to be sure it's the right step." Bottin has also been offered the special makeup effects chores on director Ridley Scott's latest project and his name has been mentioned in connection with the Twilight Zone film, but he is not at liberty to discuss either at this time. Whatever the job, we can rest assured that Bottin will literally dream up something worthwhile for *us* to lose sleep over.

Road Warrior

(Continued from Page 26)

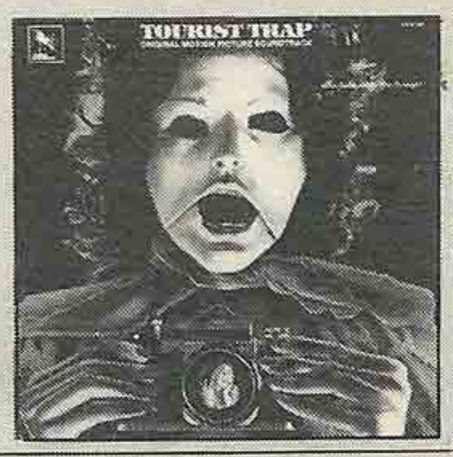
It's run by the middle men of the business: the distributors, the publicists, the agents, the promoters. It's not really conducive to production, I find."

At present, Kennedy and Miller are working on a six-part mini series for Australian television to be broadcast in June. Kennedy says, "We're hoping it will be to Australian television what *Roots* was to American television. It's got a good chance to be the all-time ratings champ in our country." The series will deal with the period leading up to the overthrow of the socialist-labor government of Australia in 1975. "It's an event in Australian history that's very, very significant to Australians. It's a very emotional issue and as a result there's an enormous interest in it in our country."

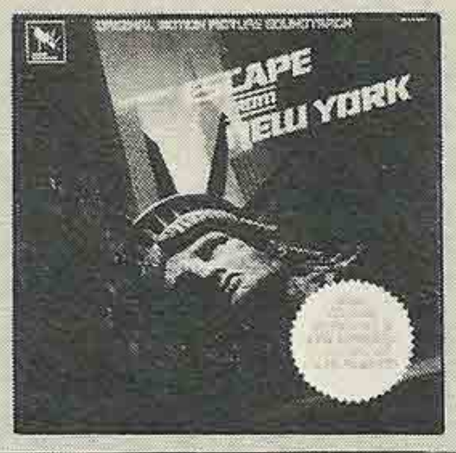
Once this major project is completed, the producer-director team of *The Road Warrior* plan on taking three months off, their first holiday in seven years. While on vacation, they will consider the several ideas they have on their production slate and then will decide what will be their next picture. Kennedy says these proposals range from broad comedy to melodramas to more action movies. "We're not in a position where we have to race back home and start shooting a movie to keep our overhead down or anything like that. We have no need to make a movie just for the sake of it. We really only want to do things we find ourselves motivated enormously to do."

And what of Mad Max? While maintaining the same basic appeal of the first film, *The Road Warrior* was significantly different in approach from *Mad Max*, while the ending of the sequel clearly left room for yet another, even more riveting adventure. When speaking of the possibilities of a Mad Max series, Kennedy gives a hint of the sort of dedication and thoroughness that helped make the first two movies so enjoyable. "The only restrictions on Mad Max sequels is the confines of our own imagination. As a concept, there's no reason why there couldn't be 33 movies, like there is in the Bond series or as they propose to do in the *Star Wars* series. We do have ideas for *Mad Max 3*, but we won't go ahead with it just to do another Mad Max movie to try to cash in on the characters. The only way we'd ever endeavor to do a *Max Max 3* would be if we thought it would be significantly different and significantly better than the leap made between *Mad Max* and *Road Warrior*. To get a quantum jump like that is hard, it takes a long time, it takes a lot of thought and alot of preparation and a lot of hard work."

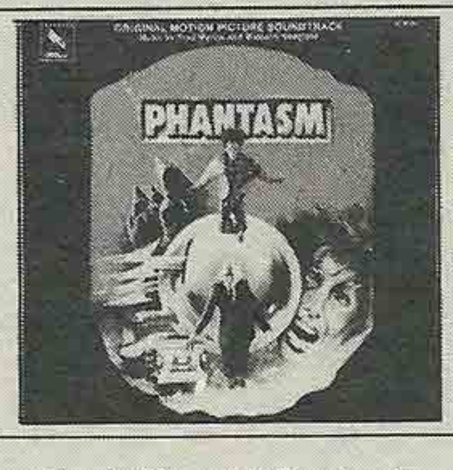
THE FANGORIA RECORD SHELF!



FOUR BY DONAGIO! Music to nibble by from Joe Dante's *Piranha!* Music to transform by from Dante's *The Howling!* Music for Chuck Connors to act by from *Tourist Trap!* Music to slash by from *Dressed To Kill!*



ROMERO AND CARPENTER! Goblin's zombie rock for *Dawn of the Dead!* Music for delicate vampires from *Martin! Halloween* themes re-orchestrated for *Halloween II!* Music for society to fall apart by from *Escape From New York!*



MAD MISCELLANY! Before *The Road Warrior* there was *Mad Max!* Music to remember Lon Chaney by from *Man of a Thousand Faces!* Music to turn dreams into nightmares from *Phantasm!* Music to romp in the swamp by from *Swamp Thing!*

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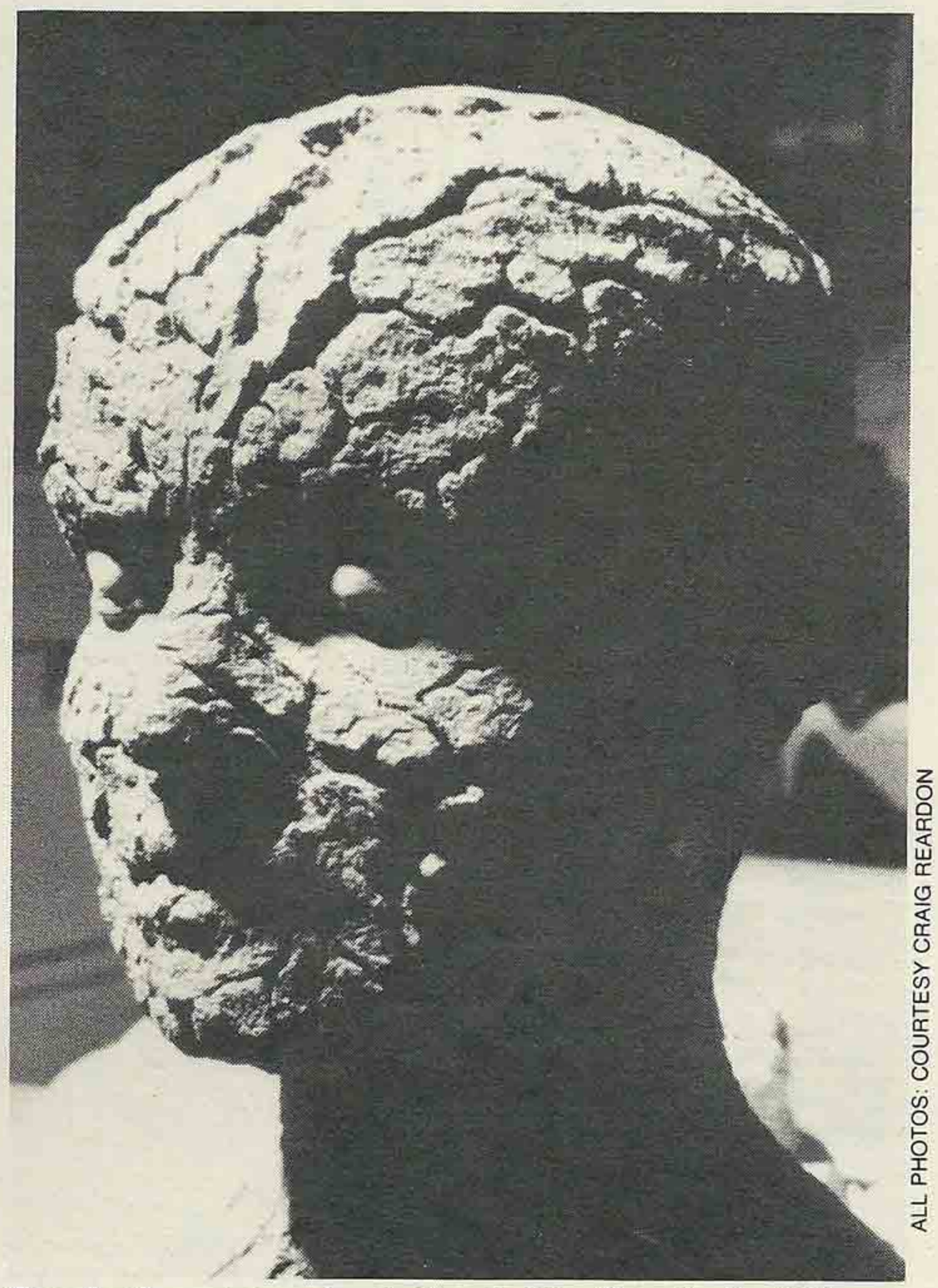
Craig Reardon— The Further Adventures!

The E.T.'s personal cosmetician speaks.

By Bob Martin

Portrait of the Artist as an Old Man—yes, that's Reardon, prepared for Halloween 1980.



Reardon's sculpture for the head of the "cracked suit," worn by Blair Brown in *Altered States*.

ALL PHOTOS: COURTESY CRAIG REARDON

Editor's Note: Here it is, six weeks later, and we still haven't been able to shake loose any photos of Craig Reardon's work as it appears in Poltergeist *(or even the* E.T.*!). Nevertheless, we forge ahead with the story of Reardon's career heretofore, of his contributions to* The ExtraTerrestrial, *and some brief news of his next exciting assignment*

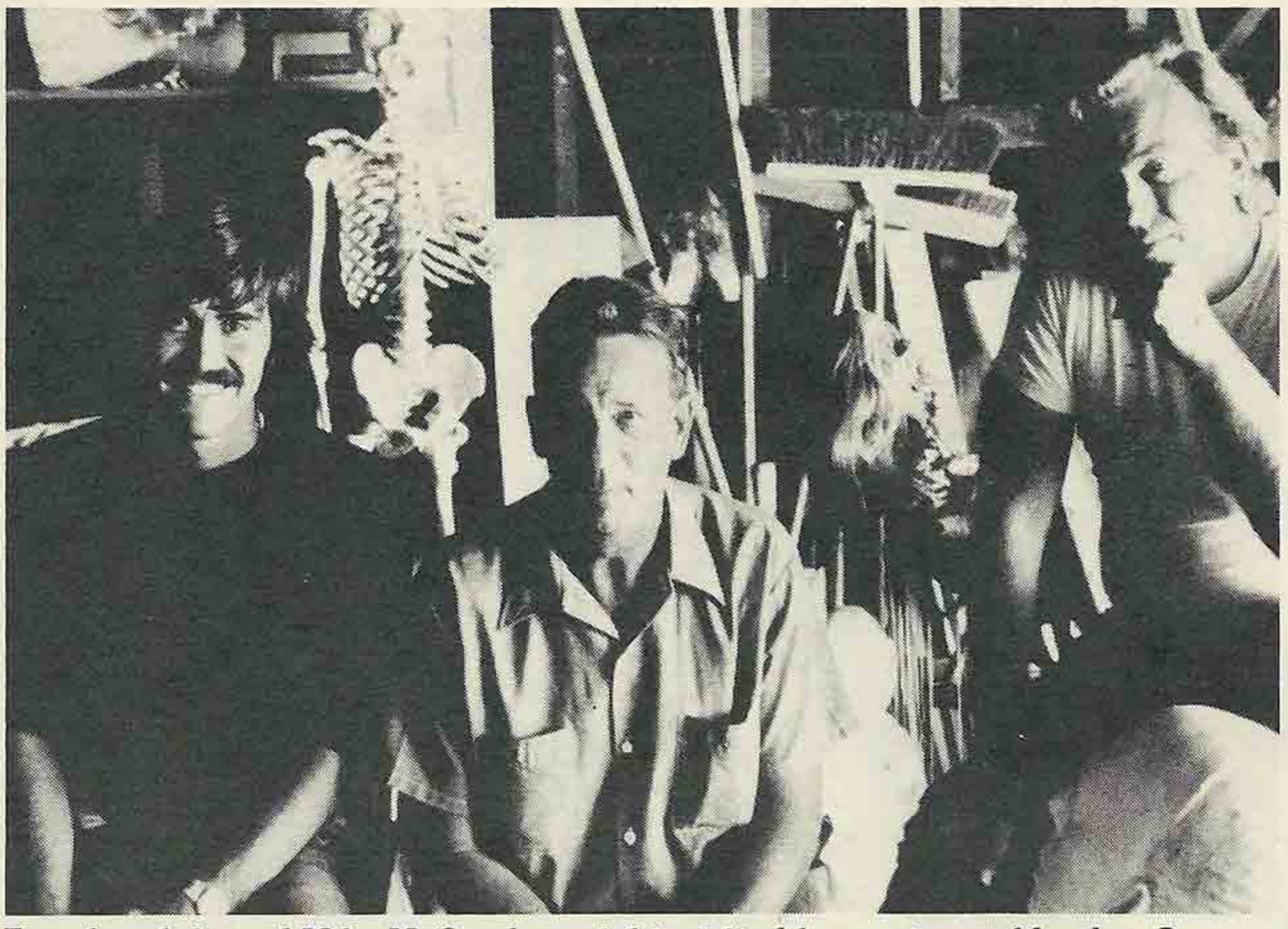
When last we left Craig Reardon, he had just stepped into Steven Spielberg's office, and had been introduced to Spielberg's answer to Smurfs, *The ExtraTerrestrial*. "What do you think?" asked the world-renowned, charismatic film director.

"As time went by, the creature certainly grew on me," Reardon recalls. "It certainly looks much different when it's animated than it did as a still-life, and, when you see it in the film, it's adorable. But at the time, Steve was real enthused, while I was less so, though I did my best to conjure up a little more enthusiasm."

At the time that Reardon first met the diminuitive alien, it consisted of no more than a pieced-together shell, an early mock-up. The first thing Reardon noticed "was that it was painted a flat Crayola flesh-tone, so it didn't look convincing, and each wrinkle on its face had been arduously painted on, which looked fussily overdone. The way it was painted really didn't help it come to life at all, and didn't serve to soften its features, which needed softening. It had a pugnacious Dennis the Menace look, and not a particularly lovable look, I thought at the time. So I had to be as tactful as possible while Steven continued to rave about its wonderful qualities."

While Reardon was unable to see all that Spielberg saw in that foam rubber shell, he was to have a major role in seeing that the E.T. lived up to its full potential, as the little guy's personal makeup man. "I went over to Carlo Rambaldi's studio, where they gave me an E.T. head," says Reardon, "which I took home and began to paint.

"I took that head in to Steven perhaps three or four times; finally, he approved one version, and I went back to Carlo's studio. Carlo was starting to pump out the skins by this time; I think there were five or six of them. Sometimes they were full, entire bodies, a torso like a rubber overcoat, or just



Reardon, left, and Mike McCracken, right, visited by master moldmaker G. Ferdinandsen in their *Poltergeist* shop.

hands, like sleeves. Some were meant to work over mechanics, others were going to be worn. So I sat down and started painting—and, of course, what made it particularly difficult was that each of these pieces had to be painted to match exactly the piece that had been painted before.

"As it was first painted, the flat-colored flesh didn't look organic or alive; it looked like a piece of upholstery. It needed a softly-mottled look to it, so you would have the impression of pigmentation in flesh, and feel that you were looking at a living being. The color scheme that I came up with looks fleshy; without using any stock-flesh coloring; I used soft blues, violets and reds, and used airbrush glazing techniques that gave it a feeling of depth, to give the impression of layers of skin, rather than just a painted surface. The finished work was covered with a urethane varnish, which is flexible and gives it that moist look that it has; I didn't use latex, because it isn't absolutely clear, and would have clouded the colors."

At first, Reardon's duties on the creature were to be threefold; he was also assigned to develop the "heartlight" that accompanies the psychic communications of the E.T. and his fellow saucermen, and to work on the eyes, which were not yet the liquid pools of sentiment that have so moved the nation's moviegoers. Unfortunately, fate stepped in to deal a hand—and Reardon was floored by the flu, requiring that other hands be called in. "I started working on the heartlight while I was still doing the painting, and ran into a lot of difficulty," Reardon admits, "because they wanted me to build this lightbox, that would illuminate the fellow's heart and other internal organs, into two existing E.T.'s—one that contained mechanics, and another to be worn by a midget. In both cases, that left me about an inch of clearance for whatever was needed to get the job done, and of course it had to be built so that, when the light was switched off there was no indication that it was there."

Reardon believes he was on the right track toward solving the problem, with a backlit relief sculpture; but the problem of the light's heat in that confined space had yet to be solved when his bout with flu took him off the picture. "They brought in Bob Short at the very last minute," says Reardon, "which actually worked to his advantage—they told him to get it done any way he could, so he was able to build the heartlight in a clear plastic E.T. body just for that purpose, and they left it to Carlo Rambaldi to attach the body to a head that would give it the animation that they needed for some scenes."

When Reardon recovered from the flu, it was time for him to rejoin the *Poltergeist* crew, to work on the film's final goblin apparition. "They turned to a technician at the Steinman Eye Institute at the UCLA campus, a woman who usually made human artificial eyes; she made these jumbo-sized eyes, and Carlo came up with a very clever device, a diaphragm that causes its eyes to dilate, which was used whenever the E.T. wanted to cause the boys to fly."

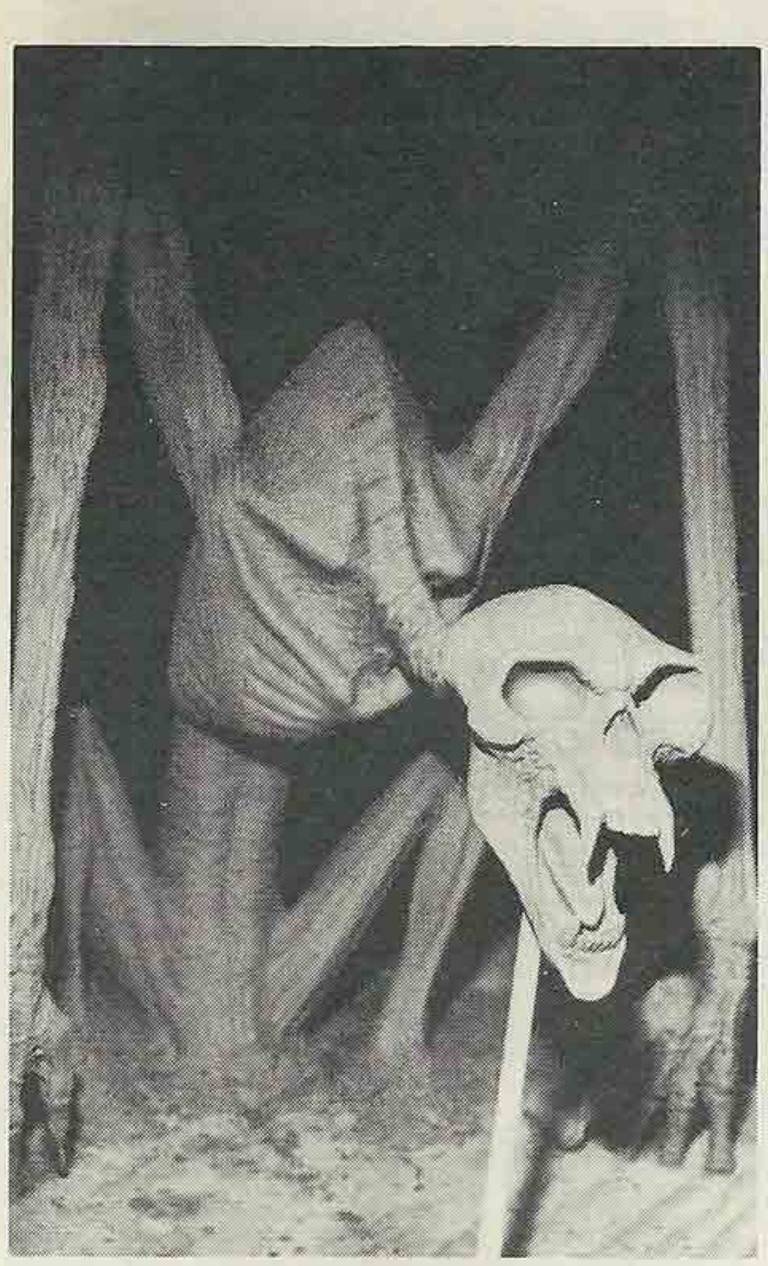
Reardon's association with Hollywood's heavy firepower this year—on *Poltergeist*, on *The ExtraTerrestrial* and on *The Twilight Zone* (a bit more about that later)—is the culmination of years of work on lesser projects, and as assistant to much better-known makeup talents. Last issue, we filled you in on his teenaged beginnings, and his first assignment in the genre, Tobe Hooper's *Eaten Alive*. It was shortly after working on that picture that Reardon was contacted by Rick Baker to assist on a picture called, at the time, *The Ghoul From Outer Space,* later retitled *The Incredible Melting Man*.

"That was toward the end of 1976; Rick had just finished *King Kong*. Rob Bottin worked on that, too. He was about 16, and I was 23. We were all working together in Rick's garage; I can't recall exactly how the work was sorted out, but I do remember very clearly how impressed I was by the speed with which Rick worked. I provided him with a duplicate head of the actor, and I think it was in less than a day he had all four stages of the melting man roughed out, and in another day or two he had them completely finished. I had to do an eaten-up body, and a number of gory things. Rob did a nice job on a nurse that was supposed to have been half-eaten—the face all gone on one side exposing bone and some nasty, chewed-on flesh.

"Rick then got *Star Wars* at the same time, which was why he couldn't participate directly on that. He put Jon Berg, Phil Tippett, Wayne Liska, Doug Beswicke and, briefly, Rob on that; that was how Lucas met Berg and Tippett [the best-known of the Lucasfilm animators]."

Most of 1977 was a fallow period for Reardon, but at the end of that year he was hired by Universal Studios after he sent in a resume of his work experience in the field. Reardon recalls his Universal experience with mixed emotions. On the one hand, *Battlestar Galactica* failed to become one of his favorite projects. "The producer was not sensitive to fantasy; he was sensitive only to opportunity, and was particularly interested in hiring anyone who had worked on *Star Wars,*" Reardon says. Conceived to capitalize on the success of *Star Wars,* the program wound up capturing all the excitement of *Lost In Space* reruns, and Reardon was a witness to the forces that caused that to happen; none of his work was used as intended, and much was not used at all, as the direction of the series was re-mapped at the production and network levels. On the plus side, Reardon was gratified to meet and work with so many veterans of the field, working anonymously in the studio system.

One of these was Nick Marsalino, who saw that Reardon was kept on, even though the union had not accepted him as a member; another was Werner Keppler, who has recently achieved some prominence for his contributions to the second *Star Trek* film. "It's also where I met [sculptor] Chris Mueller," Reardon says. "It was delightful to speak with Chris, who, little by little would tell me about this vast



As explained in greater detail last issue, Reardon's version of the white goblin (above), and his mechanical grinning head (right) were filmed, but not used in the release version of *Poltergeist*.

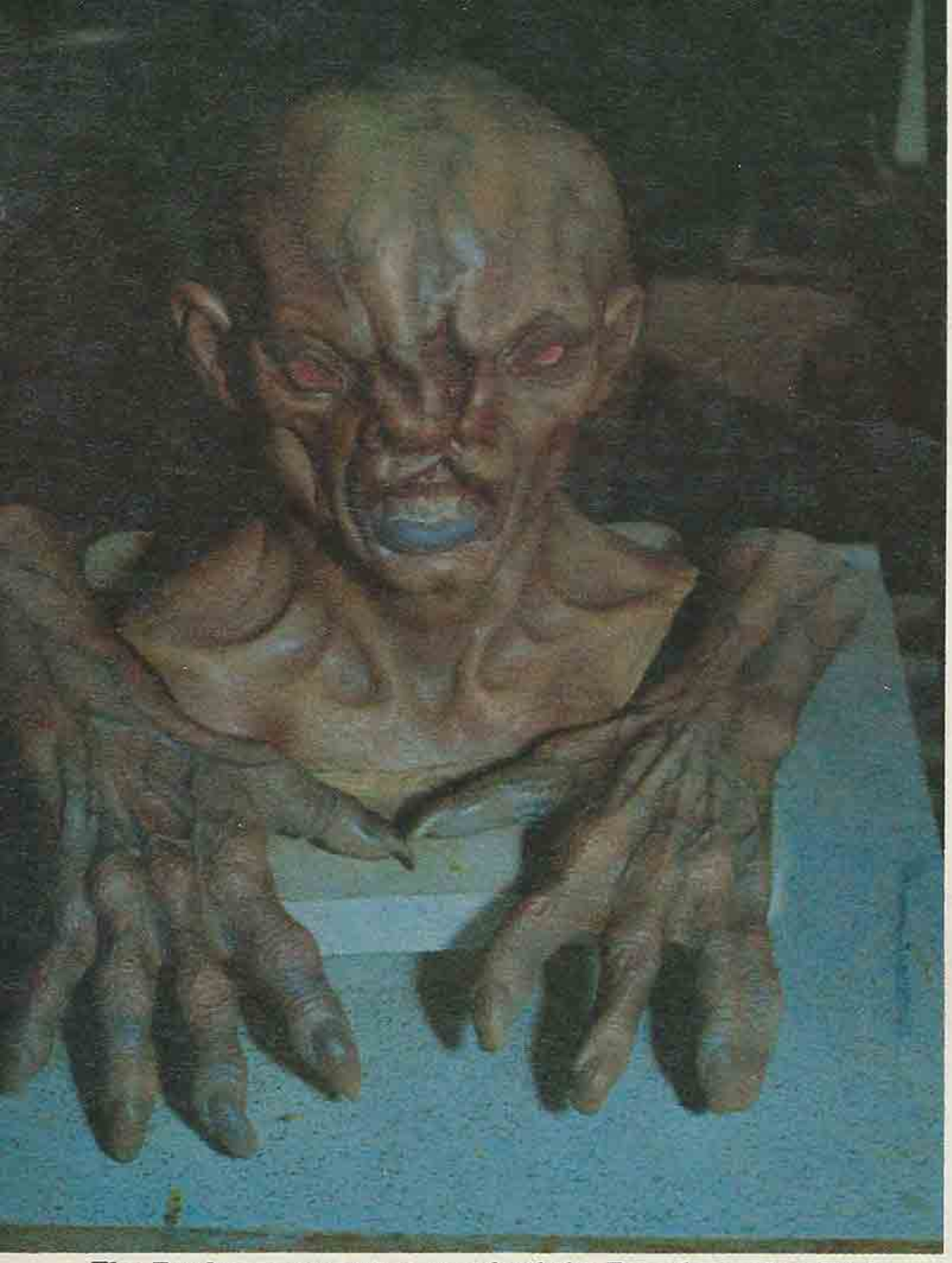
experience, about how he was trained by his father, Chris Mueller, Sr., at a very early age—and then he started bringing in these wonderful photographs that he'd saved of himself sculpting the squid for *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea,* or working on *The Creature From The Black Lagoon.*

"Another very talented man on staff there was Gnnar Ferdinandsen, who is the best moldmaker out here; I introduced Gunnar to Rick, and Rick had Gunnar do the molds for *The Incredible Shrinking Woman* and the equally extensive molds for *Night Skies* (a Spielberg U.F.O. movie project that was scrapped when *E.T.* was started). Ron Bottin placed Gunnar in charge of all the molds for *The Thing*—a landslide of very intricate molding that only Gunnar could have handled so well. Rob also used Gunnar as the fellow who's found with his throat cut and his blood frozen in the Norwegian camp; kind of an inside joke for all the people who know him."

Reardon's involvement on *Battlestar* Galactica was followed by a brief tour of duty as a conventional TV makeup man on shows like *Kojak* and *Quincy,* and a "grueling" assignment as labman to Ken Chase during the production of *Roots II.* Reardon then worked with Rick Baker and crew of Baker's Sidney the gorillasuit for *Incredible Shrinking Woman.*

*Sidney was to be Rick Baker's most elaborately engineered apesuit. He wanted all the muscles to be dis*cernible moving under the ape's flesh, so the muscles were sculpted in separate groups over a cast of Baker's body. "I would sculpt one muscle group, and place Saran Wrap over that, and built the next muscle group on top of it," says Reardon. "Then Steve Spencer, who also made molds for us on that, would mold the top set of muscles, pull away that layer and mold the next set, working his way in reverse order, back down to the fiberglass cast. Polyurethane foam muscles were made from the molds, which were then given to a tailor who individually sewed them into the suit." Reardon is particularly proud of one aspect of his work on the suit that very few are likely to notice—Sidney's incredibly detailed apefeet. "I did them in really obsessive detail; it took about two weeks to do, but Rick indulged me on it. He had acquired a cast of a dead gorilla, and I used that as a model."

During work on the ape-suit, Dick Smith visited the Baker shop; Reardon partially credits Sidney's incredible feet for the offer that Smith made, of a job working with him on *Altered States.* Reardon did major sculpting on the "cracked suit" worn by Blair Brown, and worked on the suits worn by William Hurt in the film as well. "Of course, Dick always added his refinements and finishing touches to the work," Reardon adds. "He had a remarkable technique of sculpture, where he would start doing something—you'd watch and think, 'well, that's something I can understand, so you'd turn away and workat



The *Funhouse* creature was built by Reardon, after Rick Baker designed and sculpted its bifurcated head.

Reardon's live-action dragon will announce a new line of video game cartridges on national TV this fall.

something else for 20 minutes. Then you'd go back and discover that he's accomplished some kind of miracle, and you have no idea how it happened!" Smith also delegated to Reardon responsibility to apply the primitive man makeup (designed by Smith with Carl Fullerton) to Miguel Godreaux, a Puerto Rican dancer who had been recruited to stand in for Hurt in those scenes.

One of the most unpleasant duties also fell to Reardon; after Dick Smith had finished his elaborate paint job on the suits, it was decided that the suits would instead be colored optically—they had to be painted over, a flat white. "He couldn't bring himself to do it," Reardon recalls. "He said he was going to go back to his hotel room and scream."

After many more trials (detailed in Fango #11), *Altered States* was at last completed, and Reardon went on to his next project, a low-budget independent feature entitled *The Unseen*. It was a project that initially had involved Stan Winston, Tom Burman, and director Danny Steinman; "creative differences" cropped up somewhere along the line, and the two effects men chose to leave the production. "There were a number of things I was asked to do for that picture that are not exactly 'makeup,' " Reardon says. "I built a board that would break on cue and could be assembled for additional takes; they wanted nails that would, in closeup, penetrate a head, so I built a pair of telescoping nails that would collapse inward as certain knifeblades do. And the director wanted to open the film with a closeup of a little figurine that suggested the anatomy of Stephen Furst (who played the creature in the basement), so I built that. I also built a corpse that was supposed to be Furst's father—they didn't use that, but it was used for *Poltergeist*.

"They really didn't know what they wanted this fellow in the basement to look like, they just wanted it to be the greatest makeup job in history. There were huge expectations laid on me for something which was really a very mundane character. The script had a very direct description of the character, which was based on a design by Tom Burman—who had a legal arrangement that forbade them from using that design. But I was being corralled, little by little, into attempting to recreate Tom's makeup. It was a horrible situation; I was saying I couldn't do it, they were threatening to sue me, and, if I were to do it, there would have been a lawsuit by Burman that I'd be pulled in on, and meanwhile I was up to my proverbial ass in deadlines. It was a real trip through the wringer. It eventually turned out to be a bad, but not all-that-bad, typical old-dark-house thriller."

Reardon's next project was Tobe Hooper's *Funhouse,* as detailed in issue #11, followed by special makeups for *Strange Behavior* and a stint with Rick Baker's EFX crew during the preproduction of *An American Werewolf in London*. Space requires that we catch up with those experiences during our next Reardon interview.

And that interview can't be very far away—we'll certainly want to hear what he has to say upon the release of *The Twilight Zone* movie. John Landis, who is coproducing with Steven Spielberg, tells us that the film will consist of "five and one-half" episodes; Reardon has already completed a "little something" for the half-episode, and has been speaking to one of the film's four directors (that's Landis, Spielberg, Joe Dante and George *Roar Warrior* Miller) about working on another segment (word has also reached us that Rob Bottin may be working with Joe Dante on a segment).

So it's not goodbye to Craig Reardon—it's just *hors d'oeurve*.

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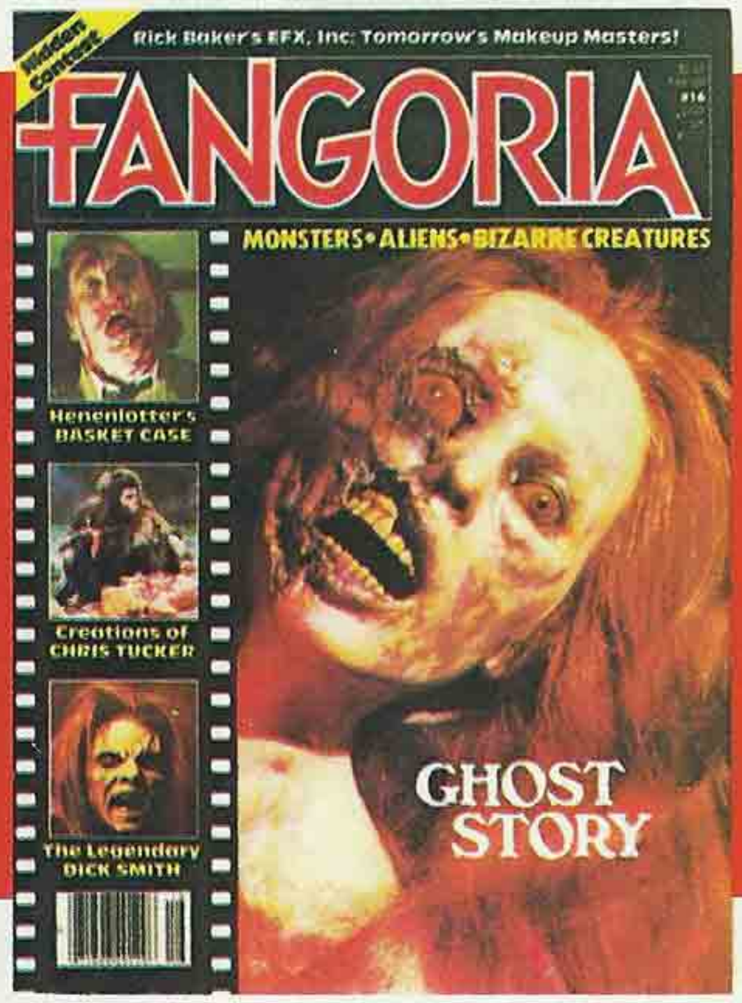

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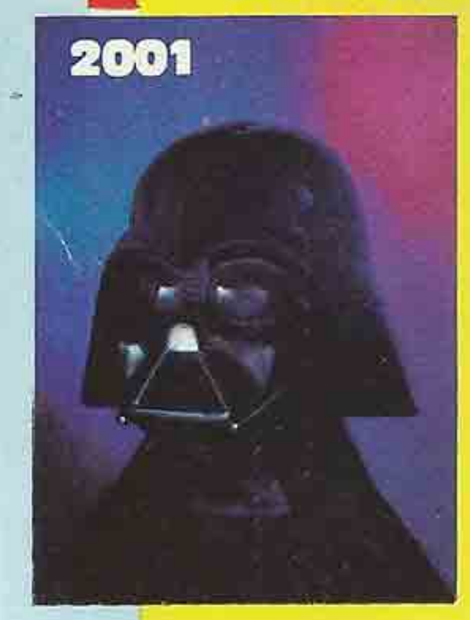

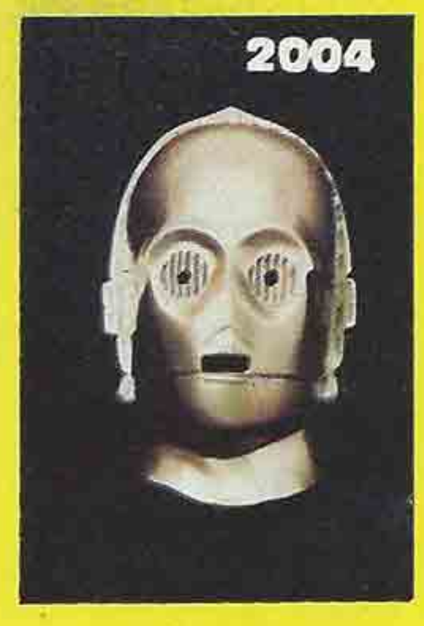

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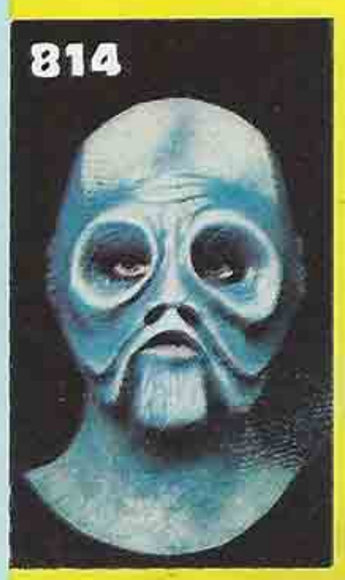

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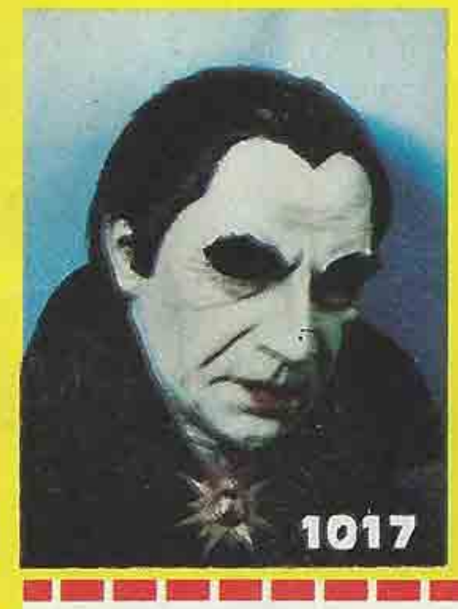

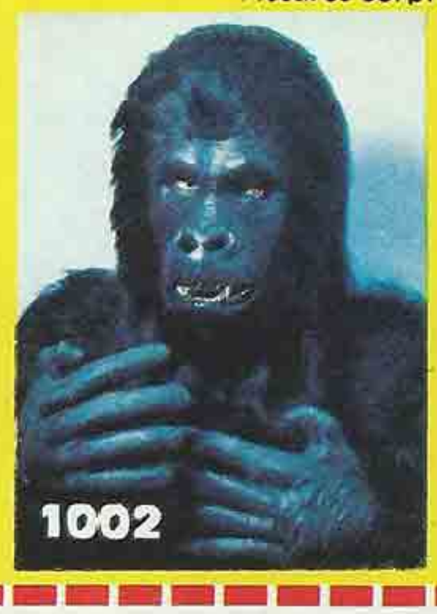

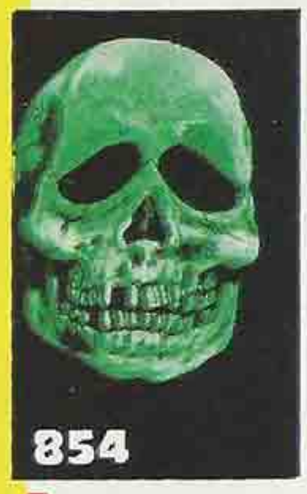

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